English Translations of

Majmoo'al-Fatawa of late Scholar Ibn Bazz (R)

Second Edition

By:

Sheikh `Abdul `Aziz Bin `Abdullah ibn `AbdulRahman ibn Bazz (May Allah forgive and reward *al-Firdouse* to him and his parents)

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful!

Praise be to Allah, and may Allah's peace and blessings be upon Allah's Messenger! To proceed:

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) helped us finish this volume of the book written by His Eminence, Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz (may Allah be merciful with him), which is entitled "A Miscellaneous Compilation of Fatwas and Articles". So far, twenty eight volumes have been published, the last of which is an appendix of `Aqidah (creed) issues, followed in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) by the twenty ninth and thirtieth volumes, which are appendices of the "Books of Taharah" (ritual purity) and Salah (Prayer). Some articles and Fatwas (legal opinions issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) of His Eminence were collected in his lifetime, but they were not placed in their proper places after the previous volumes had been published. His Eminence (may Allah be merciful with him) saw that they had better be collected at the end of the Book under the title "appendices". Carrying his orders, I delayed these articles and Fatwas until the end of the volume, which will be followed by general indices. This notification is for the reader to understand the reason.

We implore to Allah to forgive our Shaykh and place him in Jannah (Paradise), Amen. Praise be to Allah, by Whose Favor good deeds are accomplished. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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Book: The appendices of `Aqidah

1-

The creed of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! The best outcome will be for the righteous. Peace and blessing be upon His Servant, Messenger, Close Friend, His trustee to the matter of revelation, and our Prophet, Imam, and master, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, his family, his Companions, and those who follow his guidance until the Day of Judgment!

There is no doubt that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) created and ordered all creatures to worship him. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone). I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures). Verily, Allâh is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong.﴿ He commanded His Servants to observe this worship and ensured their provisions as He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And no moving (living) creature is there on earth but its provision is due from Allâh.﴿ He sent all Messengers to achieve this great purpose.

They are sent to invite and instruct people to worship Allah and explain how to achieve it. He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ Thus, all messengers are sent to achieve one purpose; namely worshipping Allah Alone without associating any partners with Him. He (may He be Praised) says: ﴾And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) but We revealed to him (saying): Lâ ilâha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allâh)], so worship Me (Alone and none else)."﴿

In many locations in the Qur'an, Allah ordered His Servants to observe `Ibadah (worship) for which they are created and the messengers are sent. In Surah Al-Baqarah, He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾O

mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious).》 In Surah Al-Nisa', He says: 《Worship Allâh and join none with Him (in worship)》 He addressed the Children of Israel saying: 《And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.》 In Surah Al-Bayinah, He says:

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《And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât) and give Zakât》 And: 《So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only. Surely the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allâh only.》

This is the `Ibadah for which the creations were created and ordered to show and all the messengers were sent to show how to observe it. This `Ibadah is detailed in Allah's Book and in the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace be upon him). Likewise, our Prophet Muhammad, the last and best of the messengers, was sent to all people to invite them to worship Allah and observe Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah) and sincerity. He (peace be upon him) stayed in Makkah for thirteen years. During this period, he invited people to worship Allah, observe Tawhid and shun worshipping anything else such as the idols, pagans, angels, prophets etc., other than Allah. He adopted the saying: 《O people, say: "There is no one has the right to be worshipped but Allah," to prosper.》 Only a tiny minority of people responded actively while many people were arrogant toward obeying and following him. He then was ordered to migrate to

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Madinah to escape the harms caused by Mushrikin (persons who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Those people who followed what he brought and he migrated to and stayed in Madinah for ten years during which he invited people to obey Allah and explained to them His Shari`ah. Some of the Qur'an was revealed in Makkah and some in Madinah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained the meanings of the Qur'an to people. He was granted two kinds of revelation: Qur'an and Sunnah.

《By the star when it goes down (or vanishes).》 《Your companion (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) has neither gone astray nor has erred.》 i.e., the Prophet 《Nor does he speak of (his own) desire.》 《It is only a Revelation revealed.》 The Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the teachings of Shari`ah were revealed by Allah. These components of Islam were conveyed to the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) may Allah be pleased with them who in turn transmitted them to their Tabi`un (Followers, the generation after the Companions of the Prophet). Still, this knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another and from one century to another by the people of knowledge who produce books elaborating on the principles of Da`wah (calling to Islam) adopted by the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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and teachings of Allah's Religion. The Muslim's `Aqidah (creed), which is adopted by Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body), is what Allah has shown in His Book, what His Messenger pointed out in his Sunnah and what the Sahabah received from their Prophet and conveyed to people. This religion implies observing Tawhid and obedience to Allah, following His Messenger and abstaining from what he forbade as well as belief in all that Allah and His Messenger told. The `Aqidah adopted by Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah and Salaf (righteous

predecessors) indicates belief in Allah and His Messenger and in all what Allah and His Messenger had told us. It also necessitates acting upon it in words, deeds and creed out of love, submission and sincerity. Belief in Allah and His Messenger means belief in and obeying all that Allah and His Messenger had told us through words and deeds.

Every believer should follow the Sahabah and the good Salaf in acquiring these principles from Allah's Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger. He (peace be upon him) explained the implications of Islam, Iman and Ihsan (the perfection of Faith) and pointed out Allah's Obligations and Prohibitions through words and deeds.

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According to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, a Muslim should follow what Allah and His Messenger have told us and ordered us to do out of true faith, love, sincerity, desire and fear. They fulfill Allah's Obligations, avoid His Prohibitions and observe His Limits without Riya' (showing-off), hypocrisy or seeking reputation.

This kind of `Ibadah is called by Allah Islam, Iman, Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared) and guidance. He says: ﴿Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm.﴾ , ﴿whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord!﴾ , ﴿"Truly! The Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2) will be amidst Gardens and water-springs (Paradise).﴾ , ﴿O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord﴾ , ﴿O you who believe! Believe in Allâh, and His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴾ And: ﴿Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us"﴾

It implies Iman, Islam, guidance, Taqwah, righteousness, reform and integrity.

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This is the religion with which Allah sent His Messenger (peace be upon him) and all the other messengers. This should be achieved by utterance with the tongue, acts with organs and belief with the heart out of love, desire, fear, sincerity and truthfulness. Belief in all that the Divine Books and messengers brought comes under the heading of belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and in the Predestination, its bad and good consequences. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allâh, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allâh, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets﴾ And: ﴿Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us"﴾ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿The Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. Each one believes in Allâh, His Angels, His Books, and His Messengers. (They say), "We make no distinction between one another of His Messengers"﴾ And: ﴿O you who believe! Believe in Allâh, and His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)﴾

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Islam- according to the `Aqidah of Ahl Al-Sunnah wa Al-Jama`ah- implies belief in Allah by utterance, actions and creed. This belief includes what the Messenger (peace be upon him) told Jibril when the latter asked about Islam, Iman and Ihsan. He (peace be upon him) pointed out the five pillars of Islam, the six pillars of Iman and the meaning of Ihsan saying: ﴿Islam implies testifying that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, performing Salah i.e., prayers, giving Zakah i.e., obligatory charity, fasting the month of Ramadan, and performing Hajj i.e.,

pilgrimage if you are solvent enough (to bear the expense of) the journey. He (the inquirer) said: Inform me about Iman (faith). He (the Prophet) replied: That you affirm your faith in Allah, in His angels, in His Books, in His Prophets, in the Day of Judgment, and you affirm your faith in the Divine Decree about good and evil. He (the inquirer) again said: Inform me about al-Ihsan (performance of good deeds). He (the Prophet) said: That you worship Allah as if you are seeing Him, for though you don't see Him, He, verily, sees you.) The religion of Allah implies the three elements mentioned above. Islam is the apparent deeds which Allah and His Messenger ordered to be performed. It is called Islam because it implies submission and subjection to Allah. A Muslim observes Allah's ordinances and avoids His Prohibitions out of submission and subjection to Allah, which is the meaning of worshipping Allah.

The `Ibadah for which Allah has created us is called Islam (Allah's Religion), Iman and guidance. The Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: (Islam implies testifying that there is no deity but Allah...) is included in his saying of belief in Allah.

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The creed which Ahl Al-Sunnah wa-l-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community) learnt from the Companions of the Prophet from the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself is to have faith in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the Divine Decree, whether good or bad.

These six fundamentals are the basics of religion. Iman (belief) in Allah includes believing in all what Allah ordered and legislated including Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah), sincerity to Him, testifying that none has the right to be worshipped but him and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is His Servant and Messenger, Salah (Prayer), Zakah (obligatory charity), Sawm (Fast) and Hajj (Pilgrimage) for this is meant by believing in Allah and all Messengers. This is clarified in Allah's Book and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Thus, Iman includes all that Allah and His Messenger ordered us to do such as Salah, Zakah, Sawm, Hajj, Jihad (fighting in the Cause of Allah),

enjoining good and forbidding evil and the likes of Allah and His Messenger's commands.

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Believing in the angels means believing in all the angels that were created by Allah; a person should believe that Allah created angels to worship and obey Him, and carry out His Commands (Glorified and Exalted be He). All of them were created from light; they obey Allah and carry out His Commands (Glorified and Exalted be He); and only Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) knows their number. We believe in them in general and in particular; we believe that Allah has angels who obey Him and carry out His Commands, some of which He has told us about, such as Jibril (Gabriel), Mikha'il (Michael), Israphil (Seraph) Malik, the gatekeeper of Hellfire, and the angel of death. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) told us about those angels in particular, and we should believe in them. We should believe in the divine books as well. All this is included in Iman (Faith) and Islam; Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) sent Messengers and revealed Books to them according to His Saying, ﴾Indeed, We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance (justice)﴿

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Allah sent them and revealed Divine Scriptures to them in order to reveal Al-Haqq (the Truth) for the people, so we should believe in all the Scriptures revealed by Allah in general and in particular to the Messengers (peace be upon them), including Tawrah (Torah), Injil (Gospel), Zabur (Book revealed to Prophet Dawud [David]) and Qur'an which is the greatest of them and which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). We also believe in the Scriptures of Musa and Ibrahim, and all the books revealed by Allah to His Messengers, on top of which comes the Qur'an. We also believe in all the Messengers, and that they delivered the Message and fulfilled the Amanah (trust). Those Messengers (peace be upon them) include Adam (peace be upon him), the Messenger and Prophet whom Allah spoken to, and who was sent to his progeny to call them to Tawhid (monotheism). Then, Allah sent Nuh (peace be upon him) after Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) had spread among the people. Nuh (Noah, peace be upon him) conveyed the Message; fulfilled the Amanah; and endured his people nine hundred and fifty years where he kept calling them to Allah. When they kept on being obstinate, Allah made them perish and made Nuh (peace be upon him) and his supporters survive on the arc. The same applies to the following Messengers such as Hud, Salih, Shu`ayb, Lut, Musa,

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Harun and others. All of them conveyed the Message and fulfilled the Amanah(the obligatory acts of worship), until Allah sent the best and last of them, Muhammad (peace be upon him). This is the `Aqidah (creed) of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body); believing in Allah and His Messenger entails believing in all those Messengers (peace be upon them) as well; that they conveyed the Message and fulfilled the Amanah; and that they endured patiently. Some of them were killed while others were saved; some of them were followed by masses while others were followed by a few people. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Hadith reported from Ibn `Abbas , ﴾Some Messengers were followed by a few people; others were followed by one or two persons; and others were followed by none.﴿ The latter were opposed by all their people; we seek refuge with Allah from that. We should also believe in the Day of Resurrection, which is the fifth basis of Iman. Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah believe in the Day of Resurrection, as

opposed to this worldly life. On this day, all the people will be reckoned with for their deeds; the Mizan (the Scales for weighing deeds) will be placed; and people will be given what they deserve. Whoever takes his record of deeds with the right hand is considered a happy winner who deserves Jannah (Paradise); and whoever takes

his record of deeds with the left hand is doomed and will enter Hellfire. Believing in the Day of Resurrection entails believing in all what Allah and His Messenger told us about this day; about Jannah, Hellfire, reward and reckoning. All this is included in believing in the Day of Resurrection.

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The sixth fundamental is belief in Predestination: Allah (Exalted be He) has knowledge of things before they occur and He (Glorified be He) preordains them and whatever He wills is destined to happen and whatever He does not will is not destined to happen. Allah knows the acts of people and all that happens in this life and in the Hereafter and He counts and records them. Muslims learned from their Prophet (peace be upon him) to believe in the Last Day as indicated by the Qur'an, Allah says: ﴾Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us"﴿ ﴾but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allâh, the Last Day﴿ Muslims learned Iman from their Messenger (peace be upon him) and from the book of their Lord. They took from them that they should believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and Predestination, its bad and good consequences. Thus, one must believe that Allah has knowledge of all things

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and counts and records them. One must believe that Allah is Omnipotent over all things and knows the affairs of His Servants, and that people do not surpass Allah's Predestination and Knowledge. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) told companions of that they said: ﴾"O Allah's Messenger! Should we not depend on what has been written for us and abandon deeds? Thereupon he said, "No, perform good deeds, for everyone is facilitated in that for which he has been created; the good deeds are made easy for the blessed, and bad deeds are made easy for the wretched." Then he recited Allah's Saying: ﴾As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allâh and fears Him, And believes in Al-Husnâ.We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness).But he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient. And denies Al-Husnâ. We will make smooth for him the path for evil.﴿ ﴿

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Also, it is included in Iman (belief in Allah) to have faith in the Noble Names and Attributes of Allah which involves believing in Allah's Shari`ahs (Divine laws) such as Salah (Prayer), Zakah (obligatory charity), Sawm (Fast), Hajj (Pilgrimage), Jihad (fighting in the Cause of Allah), enjoining good and forbidding evil, and the like. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in

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the authentic Hadith when a man said: ("O Messenger of Allah, inform me of the basic rule in Islam in a word that lets me in no need to ask anybody after you. He said: "Say I firmly believe in Allah, and then keep steadfast to it.") Consequently, every good deed is included in Iman that covers all that Allah and His Messenger commanded. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allâh (Alone)," and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!)

The one who believes that Allah is the Lord and He is the One Who rightly deserves to be worshipped and abides by Allah's Religion is observing the right path of Allah's Religion. This is Islam, Iman, Huda (guidance) and `Ibadah (worship) for which we were created and that is represented in two things; faith in Allah and adherence to His Religion. Faith in Allah includes believing in Allah as the right God who deserves to be worshipped and believing in all that Allah defined of commands and prohibitions, and observing all of this. This is `Ibadah, Religion, Iman, Islam, Huda and Taqwah. Believing in Allah includes believing in Allah's Names and Attributes; one should believe that Allah is the All-Wise, All-Knowing,

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Most Merciful, Ever-Merciful, Omnipotent over everything, has knowledge of everything, disposes all the affairs, able to do everything and by Him is the end of all people. Believing in the Names and Attributes of Allah is included in faith in Allah and therefore every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) should believe in Allah and abide by His Shari`ah (Law) by performing orders and avoiding prohibited matters and this is what is meant by Islam and Iman. Iman includes performing obligations, avoiding prohibitions and keeping away from surpassing the limits in addition to believing in Allah's Names and attributes and in all that Allah and His Messenger told us about from what has already taken place and what will still take place.

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Allah's Attributes and Names are Tawqifiy (bound by a religious text and not amenable to personal opinion). They should be taken from Allah's Book and Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him) and Muslims should believe in them. They are to believe in all what is mentioned in Allah's Book and in the authentic Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him of Allah's Names and Attributes and) for all of this is included in Iman (faith) in Allah. Also, one should believe that there is nothing like Allah and that He has absolute perfection in His Knowledge, Tawhid (Oneness of Allah), Omnipotence, Wisdom and in all His Names and Attributes. Allah (Glorified be He) said: ﴾There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴿

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﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "He is Allâh, (the) One﴿ ﴾ "Allâh-us-Samad (السيد الذي يصمد إليه في الحاجات) [Allâh the Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, (He neither eats nor drinks)].﴿ ﴾"He begets not, nor was He begotten.﴿ ﴾"And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."﴿ ﴾So put not forward similitudes for Allâh (as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything). Truly! Allâh knows and you know not.﴿

To Allah pertains the absolute perfectness in Knowledge, Omnipotence, Life and in every matter of His, may He be Exalted and Glorified. He, glory be to Him, has no partner, no equal, and there is nothing like Him. His Names and Attributes were mentioned detailed and general in case of affirmation for example, He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing, All-Powerful, All-Wise and knows everything. Allah's Attributes were mentioned in detail in confirmation and general in negation. Allah mentioned both of them in the following quoted Ayahs: ﴾There is nothing like Him﴿ ﴾"And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."﴿ ﴾So put not forward similitudes for Allâh (as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything).﴿ All of this is general negation and includes also detailed negation, such as His saying: ﴾"He begets not, nor was He begotten.﴿ Anyway, the detailed negation is rare but in most cases negation comes in general to negate deficiency, blemishes and likeness of creatures to Allah.

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Allah (Exalted be He) referred to His Attributes in His Noble Book in detail. He said: ﴾Verily, Allâh is All-Hearer, All-Seer.﴿ ﴾Surely, Allâh is All-Knowing, All-Wise.﴿ ﴾He is Allâh, beside Whom Lâ ilâha illâ Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He) the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.﴿ ﴾He is Allâh beside Whom Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects, the Giver of security, the Watcher over His creatures, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allâh! (High is He) above all that they associate as partners with Him.﴿ ﴾He is Allâh, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the Best Names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴿

These Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and the like elaborate on the Names of Allah and His Attributes and a servant to Allah should believe in them and in all that Allah and His Messenger mentioned of Names

of Allah and His Attributes in the way that befits Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). He does not resemble His Creatures in any of His Attributes and we should believe in this in the way that befits Allah for He has no partner, no equal and no similar. Allah's Knowledge, Omnipotence, Sightedness

and all His Attributes are perfect and not like ours, yet He is more Great and Perfect. Among His Attributes is that He has Two Hands that are widely outstretched, All-Hearing, All-Seeing and has a foot as reported in the authentic Hadith: ((The people) will be thrown into Hellfire and it will keep on saying, 'Is there any more?' until Allah, the Exalted and Glorious puts His Foot over it, whereupon its different sides will come close to each other, and it will say, "Qat! Qat! (Enough! Enough!)") There is nothing similar to Allah in His Hearing, Seeing, Hands, Face, Foot or anything else. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (And the Face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honour will remain forever.) (Everything will perish save His Face.)

These attributes by which He described Himself, we are to attribute them to Him and confirm them as he confirmed them. He (Glorified be He) maintained that He has a Face, Two Hands, Audition, Sight, Foot and Fingers and all of these attributes befit Him and He does not resemble His Creatures in any of them.

It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Verily, hearts are between two fingers out of the fingers of Allah. He turns them to any (direction) He likes.)

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O fellow Muslim! You thus know that believing in the Divine Scriptures comprises both general and particular belief in all Scriptures revealed to Allah's Messengers and Prophets. Consequently, we have to believe specifically in the Divine Books that Allah (Exalted be He) named such as Tawrah (Torah), Injil (Gospel), Zabur (Book of Psalms), Scriptures of Ibrahim (Abraham, peace be upon him) and Musa (Moses, peace be upon him), and the Qur'an which is the final and greatest Divine Book.

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We believe in angels generally and particularly. We believe particularly in the angels that Allah (Exalted be He) named such as Jibril (Gabriel, peace be upon him) and Mika'il (Michael) but we believe generally in the angels that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) did not name to us. We thus believe that Allah has angels whose number is only known to Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said regarding angels: ﴾In Al-Bayt Al-Ma'mur (The Oft-frequented House; a house in the seventh heaven parallel to Ka'bah), seventy thousand angels visit everyday and never revisit again.﴿ Since seventy thousand angels visit Al-Bayt Al-Ma`mur (the Oft-frequented House; a house in the seventh heaven parallel to Ka'bah) every day and do not come back to it, definitely Allah Alone (Glorified and Exalted be He) knows the number of angels. Moreover, there are angels who follow one another in visiting the believers.

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They witness Salah (Prayer) with us. When we finish Fajr (Dawn) Prayer, angels that spent the night with us ascend to heaven and when we finish `Asr (Afternoon) Prayer; angels that spent the day time with us ascend to heaven. Angels thus witness the deeds of the Servants of Allah for He (Exalted be He) asks them when they ascend to Him - though He knows the best -: "In what condition did you leave my Servants." The angels answer: "We left them while they were performing Salah and we descended to them while they were performing Salah." O Servant of Allah! Two angels accompany you, as well as every human being, to record your deeds. One records your good deeds and the other records your bad ones. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it).﴿ And: ﴾But verily, over you (are appointed angels in charge of mankind) to watch you, they know all that you do.﴿ It is appropriate for you, O Servant of Allah, to be keen to dictate to such angels good things to record for you. Dictate to them things that avail you and please Allah such as Tasbih (saying: "Subhan Allah [Glory be to Allah]"), Tahlil (saying: "La ilaha illa Allah [There is no god except Allah]"), Tahmid (saying: "Alhamdu lillah [All praise is due to Allah]"), Takbir (saying: "Allahu Akbar [Allah is the Greatest]"), making Da`wah (calling to Islam), teaching good, enjoining good and forbidding evil as well as all other good words and acts for everything is recorded by the angels.

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We have to believe in the Last Day.

All Mukallafs (those meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions); the jinn and human beings, have to believe in the Last Day. This includes all that Allah tells us about regarding the Day of Resurrection such as Jannah (Paradise) and Fire, reckoning, punishment and reward, distributing records, passing over the Sirat (the bridge over the Fire) on the Day of Resurrection, etc. We have to also believe in all that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) told us about the Last Day. We have to believe that Allah will resurrect His servants on the Day of Resurrection. Before this, Allah (Exalted be He) will send a pure breeze that will make all the believing men and women die so that only the wicked people will survive and they will be reckless and rash like light birds and fierce animal of prey. Satan will thus adorn to them Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and worshipping things other than Allah and their Shirk, Kufr (disbelief), and deviation will spread all over the world. Those will be the people to be overwhelmed by the Hour of Resurrection; may Allah grant us safety! On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will judge the deeds of His servants and reward or punish them according to their good or bad deeds. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And to Allâh belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, that He may requite those who do evil with that which they have done (i.e. punish them in Hell), and reward those who do good, with what is best (i.e. Paradise).﴿ And:

﴾So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it.﴿ ﴾And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it.﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾Surely! Allâh wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or a small ant), but if there is any good (done), He doubles it, and gives from Him a great reward.﴿ And: ﴾And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We to take account.﴿

All servants of Allah will thus be held accountable for all their good and bad deeds and rewarded or punished accordingly. Mizan (the Scales for weighing deeds) will be set up on the Day of Resurrection to weigh the deeds of the servants of Allah, whose Mizan (of good deeds) will either be heavy or light. ﴾Then as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be heavy,﴿ ﴾He will live a pleasant life (in Paradise).﴿ ﴾But as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be light,﴿ ﴾He will have his home in Hâwiyah (pit, i.e. Hell).﴿ ﴾And what will make you know what it is?﴿ ﴾(It is) a fiercely blazing Fire!﴿ Whoever's Mizan will be heavy will receive the record of their deeds by their right hand and vice versa. The affair of sinful people who die without making Tawbah (repentance to Allah) will be decided by Allah. Allah (Glorified be He) will forgive whomever He wills, admit them to Jannah,

so such people will receive the record of their deeds with their right hands; those are the people of salvation and happiness. Conversely, Allah (Glorified be He) will punish whomever He wills in hellfire due to their sins and bad deeds. After being purified, Allah will take such people out of hellfire and make them accompany their brothers in Jannah. It is worth mentioning that the people of Jannah will enjoy blessings there forever. They will not urinate, defecate, or even blow their noses. Rather, they will be in permanent comfort and continuous goodness. All that they eat or drink will be extracted in the form of belching and sweat. Unlike the dwellers of the Fire, who will be in continuous torment forever; may Allah grant us safety. Allah (Exalted be He) says regarding them: ﴾They will long to get out of the Fire, but never will they get out therefrom; and theirs will be a lasting torment.﴿ And: ﴾Thus Allâh will show them their deeds as regrets for them. And they will never get out of the Fire.﴿ And: ﴾and be given to drink boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels﴿ The foregoing is the fate of people. It is thus appropriate for every reasonable person to be heedful of such end and should not neglect it, as it is an inevitable end. Whoever dies, his experience of Hereafter begins. You have thus to beware of carelessness and being heedless lest you should feel utmost remorse. You have to prepare yourself for that Day before death befalls you suddenly.

You have to increase your good deeds, obey Allah and His Messenger, fulfill the rights of Allah, and keep firm on sticking to His Din (religion) by carrying out His commands and avoiding His prohibitions.

Such is a good preparation to keep firm on the Din, to believe in Tawhid (Oneness of Allah), to worship Allah Alone, to perform His obligations such as Salah (Prayer) etc., to abandon His prohibitions, and not to violate His limits while you hope for His reward and fear His punishment. Such is the proper preparation that you are ordered and created to do i.e. to worship Allah Alone, bear testimony that there is no true deity but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Servant and Messenger; to believe in Allah, his angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day and Predestination, whether good or evil. The concerned preparation comprises the devout performance of the obligations of Allah, which is based on loving Allah (Exalted be He) and hoping for being rewarded by Him. You also have to believe that Allah destined all predestinations both good and evil ones, that He (Exalted be He) knew everything and wrote it (before its happening), that He is the Creator of every thing, and that whatever Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) wills, be, and vice versa.

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Belief in the Last Day includes believing that the believers will see Allah on the Day of Resurrection when He calls people into account while disbelievers will not see Him. Allah (glory be to Him) said: ﴾Nay! Surely they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.﴿ Those who believe in Allah in this life will view Him on the Day of Resurrection and He will lay bare the Shin for them. They will look at Him and speak to Him and He will greet them. After that, the believers will see Him in Paradise whenever they desire; people will be given nothing in Paradise better than viewing Allah's Face. Allah (glory be to Him) said: ﴾For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honour of glancing at the Countenance of Allâh جل جلاله).﴿ When Muslims leave Mawqif (a place where people will stand on the Day of Resurrection before Reckoning), they will pass through the Sirat (the bridge over the Fire) which is set up between Paradise and Hell. Muslims will go through it while disbelievers will be prevented from traversing. Therefore, be keen to have good deeds that help you pass through it; believe in Allah and have Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared).

There are hooks on the Sirat that snatch people in accordance with their deeds; some people will be overtaken by these hooks but they will get away and some will be taken and thrown in Hell due to their evil deeds. However, disbelievers will not go through the Sirat but they will be driven to Hellfire,

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for they neglected Allah's Order, ascribed partners to Him and disbelieved in Him. Also, belief in the Last Day includes having faith that a believer will remain in Paradise forever. The reward in paradise is different in terms of palaces, happiness, wives, etc. Some people will be given many wives and some of them will be given less but, in any case, everyone will take two wives of Al-Hur-ul-`Ayn (women of Paradise) other than his wives in the worldly life. Some people may be given more of Al-Hur-ul-`Ayn but no one will get less than two in addition to their wives in the worldly life. Women in Paradise are more than men, if we are to consider Al-Hur-ul-`Ayn among them and they are more than men in Hellfire as well due to their great negligence of Allah's Orders and the great evils that led them to Hell. Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said: ﴾I saw you (women) in bulk among the dwellers of Hell. A woman said, "Why, Messenger of Allah?" He said, "Because you curse too much and are ungrateful to your spouses. It means they abuse often and are ungrateful to their husbands and good behavior (toward them). "If your husband is to behave well toward one of you for a whole lifetime and she was to see him do something (that she did not like), she would say that she had never seen anything good from him."﴿ Women generally become ungrateful

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by the least unpleasant thing they find from their husband and for this cause they represent most of the people of fire due to their wrongdoings and disbelief in Allah and His Messenger. Believing women live with their believing husbands in Paradise and the husbands take more of Al-Hur-ul-`Ayn, everyone takes two but some may take more in accordance with their good deeds but not less than two of Al-Hur-ul-`Ayn in addition to their wives in the worldly life.

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The events of the Last Day: The dwellers of Paradise will visit one another there. They will dwell in everlasting bliss. They will not defecate, urinate, or salivate. They will neither have differences nor hatred amongst themselves; their hearts will be as if one heart and they will be glorifying Allah in the morning and in the evening. Although they will exchange visits, the harmony of thoughts and feelings among the believers, on account of higher intellectual awareness, will be one of the pleasures of eternal life. None may envy another's rank. All of them are thankful of the bounties of Allah in Paradise. They will be in comfort and everlasting happiness and will not encounter any trouble whatsoever. They will pay visits to their brothers and will visit, greet and look at

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Allah's Noble Face at fixed times. All these are the fruits of believing in Allah and the Last Day. More blessings are also in store for them when Allah gather the dwellers of Paradise and they will visit and look at Him and He will greet and talk with them.

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Believing in the Day of Resurrection entails believing that all creatures will be given their due rewards on that day; nobody's right will be lost, whether a Muslim, a Kafir (non-Muslim) or a sinner, even if it is the weight of an atom. ﴾So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it.﴿ ﴾And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it.﴿ Every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions), whether a man or a woman, should prepare for that day; bear it in mind; fear Allah as He should be feared; hold fast to Allah's religion; and observe what Allah made obligatory, whether Salah (Prayer) or other things. A woman should also fulfill Allah's rights; hold fast to Allah's religion; seek understanding of the religion; fulfill the rights of her husband according to what is Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect); and beware of ingratitude to her husband and of harming him wrongfully. A husband should also fear Allah while dealing with his family

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and should not wrong them. Allah (Exalted be He) says, ﴾and live with them honourably.﴿ A husband should fear Allah and live with his wife honorably; and a wife should fear Allah and obey her husband in Ma`ruf. They should cooperate in righteousness and piety in obedience of Allah and His Messenger, so that they remain spouses in Jannah (Paradise).

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It is necessary for perfect belief in the Last Day to believe in the Hawd (Prophet's lake in Paradise) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) on Day of Judgment that people will com to. Indeed, it is a great lake with length and width equal to one-month. Its cups are equal to the number of the stars. Only the followers of the Prophet (peace be upon him) from the believers who will arrive at it and drink from it, while disbelievers and those who turned apostate after the Prophet's death will be taken away from it. They will be deprived from drinking from it just as they will be deprived from entering Paradise. Only the believers will visit and have drinks from it as stated in the accounts of the Day of Resurrection. It will be a long day; it is fifty thousand years long.

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This day of judgment is a great day but it will not reach its midst unless the people of Paradise are inside their dwellings in Paradise. Allah (Exalted be He) said: ﴾The dwellers of Paradise (i.e. those who deserved it through their Islamic Monotheistic Faith and their deeds of righteousness) will, on that Day, have the best abode, and have the fairest of places for repose.﴿ By midday, believers in Allah and His Messenger will be in their houses enjoying the pleasures of Paradise. This is because of the large number of creatures and the length of Reckoning. Allah (glory be to Him) is the All-Wise and All-Knowing, He questions people about their deeds and give them the reward or punishment. He is the Most-Just and the Most-Fair. He (glory be to Him) said: ﴾This day no injustice (shall be done to anybody). Truly, Allâh is Swift in reckoning.﴿ ﴾Surely! Allâh wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or a small ant)﴿ ﴾And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We to take account.﴿

O servant of Allah, you should question yourself about your deeds and think about what you did! Have you observed Allah's Right, adhered to Allah's Religion,

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avoided Allah's Prohibitions and Restrictions? Have you fulfilled your duty towards your brothers, spouse, parents, children and relatives? These duties are greatly necessary. Everyone should fulfill his duties towards Allah and towards His creatures. However, the right of Allah is of greater importance. These rights defined by Allah for parents, spouse, children, Muslim brother or anybody else should be accomplished by everyone whether a man or a woman. Also, it is strongly required to call others to Allah, teach people goodness, advise others for the sake of Allah, enjoin good and forbid evil for this is among Allah's Rights on people. They should recommend one another to what is right and advise one another for the Sake of Allah. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾By Al-'Asr (the time).﴿ ﴾Verily, man is in loss,﴿ ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿

Also, among these rights on all people is to cooperate in righteousness and piety.

Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) says: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety)﴿ Therefore, it is obligatory upon every person to question himself whether he performed the rights due on him towards Allah and His slaves. Undoubtedly, this helps identifying the places of negligence to rectify them and adhere to Allah's Commands. Man should do the effort for the sake of Allah in order to fulfill the rights of Allah and His slaves.

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Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) believe that Allah speaks and will speak to the people of Paradise. On the Last Day, He will speak to His servants and they will hear His words (Glorified and Exalted be He) and that He say Salam (As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)) to the people of Paradise. He will add: (Are you pleased? They will say: How can we not be pleased and You have given us what You have not given anyone of Your creation? Have You not made our scales (good deeds) heavy? Have You not admitted us to Paradise? Have You not saved us from Hell Fire? Allah will respond, 'I will give you something better than that.' They will ask, 'O our Lord! And what is better than that?' Allah will say, 'I will bestow My pleasure and contentment upon you so that I will never be angry with you now and forever.' ") This is out of His favor and generosity (Glorified and Exalted be He).

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All what is stated by Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah is based on the Book, the Sunnah, and Ijma` (consensus of scholars), which are the three sources of Allah's Din (religion) of Islam.

It is Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah who hold strictly to the Din of Allah and His Messenger. It is they who are the followers of truth and abide by the Shari`ah of Allah. They believe that the Glorious Qur'an is the Word of Allah's which was revealed, not created. From Him it began and to Him it shall return. They believe in the things revealed to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and that the Ummah (community based on one creed) of Muhammad will be split into seventy-three sects, all of them will be in the Fire, except one. Al-Firqah Al-Najiyah (the Saved Sect) are those who believe in him. This sect is Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah who are steadfast upon the Din of Allah and follow His Shari`ah. It is Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, who will be Al-Firqah Al-Najiyah (the Saved Sect) whereas there are seventy two sects threatened to enter Hellfire for their disbelief or committing Bid'ah (Innovation in Islam) and disobedience. As for Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, they are those who stand firm and true on the Din of Allah with words, deeds, and beliefs. They followed the Shari`ah of Allah and worshipped Allah sincerely and gave advice to His Servants and avoided what incurs His anger. These are

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Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah who are the followers of truth. They are the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah be pleased with and please them) and those who followed them in righteousness. May Allah make us and you among them and purify our hearts and deeds and protect us all from the evils within ourselves and from our misdeeds! May Allah (may He be Praised) support His Din, raise His word, improve the conditions of Muslims everywhere, grant them the comprehension of the Din, make the best among them their rulers and guide their leaders! May Allah (may He be Praised) guide our rulers to all what is good and help them bring about every good and guide their people and make them of those who guide and are rightly guided and protect them from the callers to falsehood and the insinuations of Satan; and from anything that contradicts His command (may He be Praised) and the command of His Messenger (peace be upon him)! May Allah make the truth victorious by them and defeat falsehood, for He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Most Generous! Peace and blessings

be upon Allah's Servant and Messenger, Prophet Muhammad, his family and his Companions and righteous followers.

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Questions

Q1: An inquirer asks about an article published in a newspaper saying that the writer says: "It is absurd to claim that the destiny of six billion people spread across the world will be in the Hellfire based on a Fatwa that is not established on truth and justice." The writer adds adds that the followers of all divine faiths doing good deeds will enter the Jannah (Paradise) except those of them who have distorted Allah's Book. This is based on Allah's statement: ﴾Surely, those who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh, in His Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and all that was revealed to him from Allâh), and those who are the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians, - whosoever believed in Allâh and the Last Day, and worked righteousness, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.﴿ **He goes no confirming such viewpoint. What are your instructions in this regarding?**

A: There is no doubt that any one who believes in Allah, the Last Day and follows Allah's Messengers will undoubtedly enter Paradise. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Surely, those who believe (in the Oneness of Allâh, in His Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and all that was revealed to him from Allâh), and those who are the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians, - whosoever believed in Allâh and the Last Day, and worked righteousness, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.﴿

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He whoever believes in Allah and His Messengers in this nation, the Children of Israel from among the Jews and the Christians, and from other nations, will enter Jannah. Those who followed all messengers of Allah from the first (Adam, peace be upon him) to the last one (Muhammad, peace be upon him) will be admitted to Jannah, whereas those disobeying and contradicting them will enter the Hellfire. There is no doubt that the majority of the creatures will enter Hellfire, whereas the minority will enter Jannah. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.﴿ And: ﴾And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allâh's Path.﴿ And: ﴾And indeed Iblîs (Satan) did prove true his thought about them: and they followed him, all except a group of true believers (in the Oneness of Allâh).﴿

At the end of the world, the Noble Qur'an will disappear by raising it to heaven and Allah will send a wind that will take the souls of the believing men and women, and only evil persons will remain, upon whom the Hour will come. They will enter Hellfire because they continued to associate others with Allah in worship. The Hour will come upon these people. We implore Allah to grant us safety. ﴾The Hour will not come until no one on earth utters, "La ilaha illa Allah"﴿ May Allah grant us wellbeing! Regarding the claim that all the inhabitants of earth will enter the Hellfire, this is a false claim.

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Rather, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day will be among the people of Jannah. The dwellers

of the Hellfire will be those who disbelieved in Allah and opposed His command. At the end of time, the Glorious Book will disappear by raising it to heaven, believing men and women will die, and only evil persons will remain, upon whom the Hour will come up and they will be among the dwellers of the Hellfire. We implore Allah to grant us safety.

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Q2 : He mentioned another claim that Islam and faith are not limited to the message of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) alone; rather Islam and faith may be attained by every person who worships Allah in whatever manner both before and after the blessed mission of Muhammad.

A: As for the time before the mission of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), everyone believes in the previous Messengers is one of the people of Paradise. Whoever believed in Musa, 'Isa, Hud, Salih, in all the Messengers, is one of the people of Paradise if they died believing in that. But after the mission of Muhammad (peace be upon him), no one is among the people of Paradise unless he follows Muhammad (peace be upon him). All of the people of Earth after the coming of Muhammad (peace be upon him) have no way to salvation except by following Muhammad (peace be upon him).

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾My entire Ummah will enter Paradise except those who refuse, they said: O' Messenger of Allah, who will refuse? He said, "Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise and whoever disobeys will enter Hellfire."﴿ Thus, only the followers of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are those who will enter Paradise. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, every Jew or Christian of this Ummah (community) who hears about me and dies not believing in that with which I have been sent, will be one of the people of the Fire.﴿ Thus, after the coming of Muhammad (peace be upon him), no one can be one of the people of Paradise except those who follow him. As for those who hear about him and disbelieve in him, they are people of the Fire.

As for those who do not hear about the Prophet (peace be upon him) or the Qur'an, they fall under the same ruling

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as those who lived in the intervals between Prophets (Ahl-Al-Fatrah). Their case will be up to Allah on the Day of Resurrection; Allah will test them and those who pass the test will enter Paradise and those who do not pass the test will enter Hellfire. May Allah keep us safe and sound!

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Q 3: What is the ruling on one who does not declare the Jews and Christians as Kafirs (disbelievers)?

A: One who does not acknowledge the Kufr (disbelief) of Kafirs is one of them, as believing in Allah entails Takfir (declaring someone to be a disbeliever) of those who do not believe in him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith, ﴾Whoever believes in Tawhid (monotheism) and denies everything, which the people worship beside Allah, their property and blood become inviolable, and their affairs rest with Allah.﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states, ﴾Whoever disbelieves in Tâghût and believes in Allâh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allâh is All-Hearer, All-Knower.﴿

It is a must to believe in Allah, believe in Tawhid, and be sincerely devoted to Him. It is also a must to believe that Mu'mins (believers) are so and Kafirs are so, provided that Shari`ah (Islamic law) reaches them

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and they do not believe, such as the Jews, the Christians, the Magi, the Communists and others who are informed about Shari`ah but chose not to believe. These are Kafirs and will be the inhabitants of Hellfire. We seek refuge in Allah from this.

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Q 4: A questioner asks: "Some people warn against reading the books written by Imam Al-Nawawy and Ibn Hajar (may Allah be merciful with them) claiming that they do not belong to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body). What is your opinion?"

A: These two scholars, Ibn Hajar and Al-Nawawy, erred in explaining some Attributes of Allah. They and other scholars opposed Ahl-ul-Sunnah in this regard. However, they and their likes belong to Ahl-ul-Sunnah so long as they give correct explanations lacking any kind of distortion in meaning.

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Q 5: How can I deal with the Batiniyyin (followers of Batiniyyah: a deviant sect that follows many false beliefs such as believing that `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) is a god and that prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) was abrogated by the coming of the Seventh Imam Ja`far ibn Muhammad) and people of Bid`ah (innovation in religion), who come to live in our country? It may be worth mentioning that these people may be students, teachers, physicians, patients, or colleagues.

A: You must avoid whoever exposes their Bid`ah and reveres the Prophet's family members excessively whether `Ali, Fatimah, etc. or even any one of the other

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Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet). This is because worshipping the Prophet's family members and revering the Sahabah excessively is Kufr (disbelief) and Riddah (apostasy). Whoever reveals their Bid`ah must be abandoned. They should not be taken as friends or greeted. These people of Bid`ah do not deserve to be teachers or to be entrusted with any such position as they cannot be trusted. However, those who do not manifest their Bid`ah and show that they are Muslims have to be given the same treatment as other Muslims. A proof for this is narrated in a Sahih (authentic) Hadith that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked: (What are the best deeds in Islam? The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: To feed 'the poor' and say the greeting of peace (As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)) to those whom you know and those whom you do not Know.) Consequently, whoever reveals their Islam is to be considered a Muslim; we greet them with the greeting of peace and return their greeting. On the other hand, whoever expresses their Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) is not considered our brother (in Islam) while whoever reveals their Bid`ah is to be abandoned until they give it up and surrender to the truth.

Likewise, you must stay away from whoever publicly commits sins such as Zina (premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery) and drinking Khamr (intoxicants) though such sinful people may be Muslims. You must keep away from them until they offer Tawbah (repentance to Allah) from drinking Khamr and stop their abominable actions.

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Regarding non-Muslim people who enter our country under a `Ahd (pledge) of security or are given asylum, they have to be given medical treatment, advised, taught, and called to Allah until they are judged by Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). However, if they are Harbi (one who is at war against Muslims), they are not to be given medical treatment, as they will subjected to Allah's command.

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Q 6: Someone asks: Does everyone who commits major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) become a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship)? Do the rulings of Mushriks apply to him?

A: Yes, whoever does not believe in Allah is a Kafir (disbeliever) and whoever commits Shirk is a Mushrik. Likewise, whoever believes in Allah and in His Messenger is a Mu'min (believer). However, he whom the Da`wah (calling to Islam) i.e. the teachings of the Prophet including that of Ever-Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), do not reach, his case will rest with Allah. They can neither be considered Mu'min nor Kafir. They will not be treated as Muslims. They will be tested on the Day of Judgment. A neck will come out of the Fire to them and they will be told to enter it, if they obey, it will become cool and safe for them. But if they disobey, the neck will encircle them and pull them into the Fire. We implore Allah to grant us safety. In short, he whom the Da`wah reaches and does not embrace Islam is a Kafir.

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Q 7: Some people claim that they know what is beneath the earth and what is above it and define the locations of wells, especially in desert and mountain areas. Should we believe such people or is this considered soothsaying?

A: Locations of wells are not defined by soothsayers. Rather, there are signs known to specialists that help them specify them; however, specialists may be right or wrong but knowledgeable experts are usually able to give correct information. It is worth mentioning that the signs referred to above are mentioned by Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah be merciful with him) and some other scholars.

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Q 8: Some people do not define themselves as Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) claiming that all people do so. They say that it is more accurate for Muslims to relate themselves to Salaf (righteous predecessors). Is this correct?

A: Salaf are Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah. Accordingly, it is permissible for a person to relate themselves to Salaf. Doing so is correct, as it is equivalent to declaring oneself as one of Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, a believer in Allah and the Last Day, and a follower of Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet). When one relates themselves to the Salaf they ascribe themselves to the people of truth, not falsehood. Thus, they must strive to be truthful.

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Q 9: What is the degree of authenticity of the following Hadith: (Allah created Adam in His own image.) **Or "... in the Merciful's image"?**

A: Yes, it is a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith). Allah (Exalted be He) created Adam in His own image i.e. he can hear, see, speak, with eyes, hands, and feet. However, the Hadith does not imply any Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation), for Allah (Glorified be He) states: (There is nothing like Him) And: ("And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him.") This is the explanation of the Hadith by scholars of Ahl-ul-Sunnah (those adhering to the Sunnah) such as Ahmad, Ishaq, and others (may Allah have mercy on them all).

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Q 10: What is the ruling on one who utters some words implying seeking the help of Jinn (creatures created from fire), making Du`a' (supplication) to the Prophet (peace be upon him) or swearing oaths by him? When he is advised to the prohibition of making such statements, they say that their tongue is accustomed to uttering them.

A: A person should habituate his tongue to good speech and avoid uttering abominations. Claiming that their tongue has become accustomed to it is not a valid excuse. They have to guard their tongue against uttering prohibited words such as those of

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seeking the help of Jinn, offering Du`a' to them, etc. In fact, all these utterances are tantamount to Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Allah (Exalted be He) says: (And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the males among the jinn, but they (jinn) increased them (mankind) in sin and transgression.) This Ayah (Qur'anic verse) tells about the practice of many Arabs during Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance); they used to worship Jinn, seek their protection, and fear them. Believers, thus, have to avoid doing the same. They must trust Allah and rely upon Him. Believers have also to seek refuge with the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created during night and daytime. A believer should always recite: "A`udhu Bikalimat-illahi Al-Tammati Min Sharri Ma Khalaq 'I seek refuge with the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created'" three times or more in the morning and at night at home or anywhere else so that Allah protects them from such evil. The same applies if a believer recites: "Bismillahi alladhi la yadurru ma`a ismihi shai'un fil-ardi wala fil-sama'i, wa huwa al-sami`u al-`alim (i.e. In the Name of Allah with Whose Name there is protection against every kind of harm in the earth or in the heaven, and He is the All-Hearing and All-Knowing'." Repeating this three times during the day and at night or reciting Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Ikhlas (the Qur'an, chapter: 112) and Al-Mu`awwidhatayn (Surahs Al-Falaq (chapter: 113) and Al-Nas (chapter: 114)) three times in the day time and at night or after Fajr (Dawn) and Maghrib (Sunset) Prayers protects one against all harms. The point here is that those in question must protect their tongues against all prohibited kinds of speech including offering Du`a' to

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jinn, swearing oaths by others than Allah, etc. Claiming that one's tongue is accustomed to such prohibited utterances is not a valid excuse. Rather, one must avoid the prohibitions of Allah, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: (Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day has either to utter good words or remain silent.) In addition, Allah (Exalted be He) says: (Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it).) Everyone is thus responsible for the words they utter. The person in question has to protect his tongue against all the prohibited kinds of speech such as Ghibah (backbiting), Namimah (tale-bearing), slander, offering Du`a' to jinn, and Tawassul (supplicating to Allah) in the name of His creatures such as Tawassul by the Prophet (peace be upon him) or by virtue of his sanctity. However, Tawassul may be through offering Du`a' to Allah and believing in His Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism). It is also permissible to make Tawassul to Allah by virtue of one's Iman (Faith/belief) in Allah (Glorified be He), adherence to

Shari`ah (Islamic law), and good deeds. It is acceptable to say: "O Allah! I make Tawassul to You through the virtue of my belief in You, my love for You, my following Your Prophet (peace be upon him), my dutifulness to my parents, my maintaining the ties of kinship, my fulfilling trusts, etc." It is permissible that a person makes Tawassul by their good deeds as the people of the rock did. The Prophet (peace be upon him) informed us of them in his statement:

"Three persons while walking were overtaken by rain, so they sought refuge in a cave of a mountain; but a rock fell and closed the mouth of their cave. Some of them said to the others, "Think of righteous deeds which you performed for the Sake of Allah, and supplicate to Allah (Exalted be He) by them, perhaps He may remove it for you." One of them said, "O Allah! I had my two old parents, my wife and little children to look after. Whenever I brought back my herd from pasture, I would draw the milk and serve it first to my parents before my children (it was the habit of Bedouin to drink milk at night). One day the quest for pasture took me far, so I only returned in the evening to find them both asleep. So, I drew the milk as I used to, then took it and stood close at their heads, hating to wake them from their sleep and hating to hand it first to my children to drink, who were crying of hunger at my feet. I remained standing until my parents woke up by the break of dawn. (O Allah)! If You accept that I have done this only seeking Your Face (Pleasure), relieve us from this hardship caused by this rock.' So, the rock shifted a bit but not enough to allow them to get out. Another said, "O Allah! I had a cousin whom I loved as much as a man can feel for a woman, and I accosted her (to do Zina 'premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery' with)

but she refused. Later, she fell on hard times during a famine year and she came to me. I gave her 120 Dinars on the condition that she would not resist my desire, and she agreed. But when I sat between her legs, she said, 'O servant of Allah, fear Allah, and do not break the seal (i.e. take her virginity), except by its right (i.e. marriage).' So, I got off her. O Allah! If You accept that I have done this only seeking Your Face, open up a way for us." So, a way was further opened for them. The third said, I employed some laborers and paid them their wages with the exception of one man who did not take his wages and left. I invested his wages and they profited greatly. (Then after some time,) he came and said to me: "O servant of Allah! Pay me my wages."

I said, 'Go to these cows and their herdsman and take them.' He said, 'Fear Allah and do not mock me!' I said, 'I am not mocking you, take these cows and their herdsman.' So, he took them and went away. If you know that I have done that only seeking Your Face, move it the rest of the way." So, Allah removed it." The good deeds of such people availed them in the time of adversity and were the cause for their rescue. Every Muslim may make Tawassul to Allah (Exalted be He) by virtue of their Iman, piety, dutifulness to parents, Tawhid, testimony that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and belief in Allah, His Names and Attributes, His Messenger, and the Last Day. All these are Shar`i (Islamic lawful) means of Tawassul. However, Tawassul by virtue of any creation such as the sanctity of the Prophet, the honor of so and so, and the like are impermissible.

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Q 11: Someone asks about the Islamic groups such as Al-Tabligh Group and the Muslim Brotherhood Group. Are these groups considered to be among Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body)?

A: They all have some defects. They should judge themselves, adhere to the truth and fulfill the obligations of Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah), Iman (faith) and sincerity towards Allah and following His Shari`ah as indicated in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The Muslim Brotherhood (may Allah grant them success) must, wherever they are, rule according to Allah's Shari`ah, hold fast to the Din (religion/ Islam) of Allah in words, deeds, and creed and beware of going against this Shari`ah. Similarly, Al-Tabligh Group must shun the practices adopted by their forefathers such as glorifying the graves, constructing buildings or Masjids (mosques) over them, invoking and seeking help from the dead. They should beware of these acts as they are evil and are major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah). The new generation of this group does useful activities for people. They, therefore, must demonstrate Tawhid and reject the aberrant `Aqidah (creed) adopted by their forefathers.

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Q 12: It is reported on the authority of Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said "We used to say in Tashahhud (a recitation in the sitting position in the second/ last unit of Prayer) while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was alive: "Al-salaamu 'alayka ayyuha al-nabi warahmatullah wabarakatuh" (peace, mercy and blessings be upon you, O Prophet)" but after he died we would say: "al-salamu 'ala al-nabi" (peace be upon the Prophet)", is this sound and should we do so in Tashahhud?

A: It is necessary to abide by what the Prophet (peace be upon him) informed his companions. He taught them to say: "Al-salamu 'alayka ayyuha al-nabi warahmatullah wabarakatu". We should say what the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught his Sahabah (companions). He did not inform them that if he died they should change it and they used to travel to remote countries during his life and they used to say at that time "al-salamu 'alayka ayyuha al-nabi warahmatullah wabarakatu." This is but a supplication of peace, mercy and blessings to Allah concerning the Prophet (peace be upon him). This saying is not directed to the Prophet but it is a supplication to Allah seeking His Peace, Mercy and Blessing for the Prophet (peace be upon him). If one says: "al-salamu 'ala al-nabi", there is no blame but it is better to

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adhere to what the Prophet (peace be upon him) informed his Sahabah i.e. to say: "al-salamu 'alayka ayyuha al-nabi warahmatullah wabarakatu", for this is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught the Sahabah and he died upon this.

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Q 13: Is Islam restricted to the performance of certain rites or is it applied to all aspects of life? What is the ruling on saying that Islam is to be practiced only in the Masjid (mosque) and that it should not interfere in politics or in transactions and the like?

A: Islam is not only limited to private life but it provides a comprehensive system pertaining to worship, socio-economic matters, at home and during travel, etc. ﴾O you who believe! Enter perfectly in Islâm (by obeying all the rules and regulations of the Islâmic religion)﴿ A servant must fear and submit to Allah and apply His law to all things and not only to worship in the Masjid, but to all social matters with his household, neighbors and guests. One must do so in business applying the Islamic teachings in selling and beware of Riba (usury/interest), cheating, deceit, and lying.

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Islamic teachings must be applied to all aspects of life in adversity and prosperity, at home or abroad. The philosophy that Din (religion) of Islam should be restricted to worship only within the Masjid is adopted by misguided secularists who call to atheism. A Muslim must adhere to Islam in all affairs and situations. One must obey Allah, fulfill Obligations, shun His Prohibitions, and observe His Limits; be it at home, in the market, sea, air, or wherever one may be.

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Q 14: What are attributes of the seventy thousand persons who will enter Paradise without being held to account ?

A: The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained that they are those who adhere to Allah's Din. There is along with every thousand of them another seventy thousand who will be the vanguard of the Muslim community and will enter Paradise in the form of the moon on a full moon night. These people are noted for their self-restraint, adherence to Din everywhere, performing obligations, avoiding prohibitions, and vying for doing good deeds.

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They do not seek Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and supplications over the sick seeking healing), do not believe in bad omens and do not use cautery.

They do not seek Ruqyah nor use cauterization but this does not mean that these things are prohibited. There is no harm with asking for Ruqyah and cauterization when necessary, but those people abandon this and use other lawful means. If there is a need to Ruqyah or cautery, there is no harm and this does not exclude one from the seventy thousand pious persons. The Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded `Aishah to use Ruqyah when she was ill and ordered the widow of Ja`far ibn Abu Talib to seek Ruqyah for her children as mentioned in an authentic Hadith.

The same is equally applied to cautery, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) cauterized one of his companions and said: ﴾Healing is in three things: A gulp of honey, cupping, and branding with fire (cauterizing)." But I forbid my followers to use (cauterization) branding with fire.﴿ Cauterization should be the last medical option. If there is another treatment, it is better; and if it is necessary, there is no blame.

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Q 15: A habit has spread widely amongst some tribes; they bring some poets who are called Muhawarah poets. For example, in weddings and other occasions, they invite two poets; each one is from a different tribe and they are given a sum of money to entertain them all the night. Two rows of men are formed opposite to each other; each one of them for a poet, and men in each row repeat collectively and loudly what their poet says. Doing so involves clapping hands and dancing. Moreover, each poet prides himself on his noble descent and at the same time defames the other poet. What is the ruling on all this?

A: As for singing in wedding ceremonies by women and using Duff (a tambourine-like instrument without bells), it is commendable as it is regarded a declaration of marriage but it should be noted that beating the Duff during weddings is restricted to women. There should be no mixing between men and women and chanting songs that contain prohibited words. This is allowed for women and it was done during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his wives and other women used to attend such ceremonies. As for men, there is no harm if they chant Arabic poetry and listen to it on condition that they do not contain any prohibited words such as backbiting, insults, do not create

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enmity, and is not accompanied by drums or anything illegal such as defaming another tribe, which sows seeds of hatred and hostility. There is no harm in attending weddings where good poetry is recited such as that which Hassan used to recite that calls to goodness, nobility, good manners, and the best of deeds. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Some poetry may have wisdom.) And He (peace be upon him) said to Hassan: (Satirise the disbelievers, for by Him in whose Hand my soul is, it is like shooting arrows at them with your poetry.) He supplicated Allah for Hassan saying (O Allah, help him with the Holy Spirit.) Hassan used to satirize them and his poems were great and good. Similarly, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah and Ka`b ibn Malik and other good poets did the same. Among the good poems is Nuniyyah of Ibn Al-Qayyim and Nuniyyah of

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Al-Qahtani. They are very useful in matters of creed. The same is true with regard to other poems that call to good manners and the best of deeds. With regard to what the questioner asked about the two poets who face and defame one another, this is not permissible. Poetry should be used for useful matters such as calling to good manners, righteous deeds, dutifulness to parents, maintaining the ties of kinship, obeying Allah and His Messenger, obeying those in authority in goodness, and warning against sins. This will have a good affect on souls. There is no harm in giving a female singer or a poet an amount of money for their performance. However, it is impermissible to hire a poet who calls to backbiting of so-and-so or praising so-and-so or to bestir grudge and hatred.

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Q 16: Bereaved families gather at home to receive condolences of relatives for three days. Is this practice a type of wailing?

A: Wailing is not permissible but there is no harm if

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the head of household sits at home to receive condolences of relatives and other mourners. However, it is not permissible for the bereaved family to slaughter animals for the deceased or prepare meals for the mourners, as this is a baseless Bid`ah (innovation in Din). There is nothing wrong with sitting at home in the evening, or afternoon to make it convenient for mourners to offer condolences. It should be noted that offering condolences at the cemetery, in the Masjid (mosque) or on the street is sufficient.

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Q17 : What is the Islamic ruling on publishing condolences in newspapers, responding to the condolences in newspapers, and writing Glorious Qur'anic Ayahs honoring the deceased?

A: I have been informed that this is very expensive. One should be apprehensive to incur such high costs unnecessarily. Yet, there is no harm if one writes "May Allah bestow patience upon the family of so-and-so!" Or "May Allah forgive him!" However, because of the cost I feel it is preferable to abandon this act. It is sufficient to write a letter or a telegraph, if publishing it in newspapers is expensive. This kind of condolence is not that which the Messenger of Allah forbade. What was forbidden by the Prophet was the pre-Islamic practice of an announcer roaming the tribes to pronounce the death of a certain person mentioning his merits. This is an act of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance). There is no harm in writing

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a letter of condolence or publishing it in a newspaper "May Allah bestow patience upon the afflicted family of so-and-so!" Yet, if this is expensive, then one should refrain from this because this is a waste of money, which is prohibited. It is sufficient to write a letter, send a cable, or call on the phone.

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Q18 : What is the `Aqidah (creed) of Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community) regarding punishment in grave? Is this punishment experienced only by the soul or does it afflict both the soul and the body?

A: The `Aqidah (creed) of Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community) includes believing in the torment of the grave and its blessings. Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah believe that the deceased is either blessed or punished. This was explained by the Prophet (peace be upon him): The grave is a garden of the gardens of Paradise, or one of the pits of Hell. Every Muslim must believe in this. Allah displayed to His Prophet (peace be upon him) two persons suffering punishment in their graves: One of them used to slander people, while the other never guarded himself from being soiled with his urine.

Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community) believe in the torment of grave and its blessings and that it shall be experienced by both the soul and the body, but the soul has the greater part. Regarding the punishment of the people of Pharaoh, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾The Fire, they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon.﴿

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Accordingly, the righteous will be blessed in their graves, whereas the disobedient will be punished in their graves. Then, in the Hereafter after Resurrection, the blessing will be greater and the punishment will be severer.

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Q19 : Is it enough for a person to have the right `Aqidah (belief) without doing good deeds and holding fast to the Shari`ah of Allah?

A: Right belief alone is not sufficient, as doing good deeds is a prerequisite:

﴾Truly those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness﴿ Righteous deeds are a must. One must believe in Allah and His Messenger and the Oneness of Allah and perform righteous deeds. One should fulfill Allah's obligations and refrain from what Allah prohibited. Both are necessary. ﴾Verily, those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, for them are Gardens of Delight (Paradise).﴿ Righteous deeds are as necessary as having the right belief.

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Q 20: I work in Da`wah (calling to Allah) and guidance. I enjoin the good, forbid the evil and deny the Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). Some people, however, oppose me claiming that I interfere in things that do not concern me

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and that I cause Fitnah (sedition). What is the ruling on this ?

A: You should pay no attention to such people, who discourage you, so long as you have knowledge and deep insight. You should continue calling people to Allah, instructing them, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil in kindness and endure patiently expecting Allah's reward. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden)﴾ Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴿You [true believers in Islâmic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his Sunnah] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islâm has forbidden)﴾ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴿And who is better in speech than he who [says: "My Lord is Allâh (believes in His Oneness)," and then stands firm (acts upon His Order), and] invites (men) to Allâh's (Islâmic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims."﴾ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴿Invite (mankind, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islâm) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'ân) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better.﴾

Thus, you should pay no attention to them and adhere to the manners of Da`wah stated by

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Allah and His Messenger. You should not be hasty but should discharge this duty with wisdom, patience and kindness.

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Q 21: Some Mufassirs (exegetes of the Qur'an) interpret Allah's saying: ﴾Therefore remind (men) in case the reminder profits (them).﴿ **to mean that the duty of reminding people is only when reminding them is beneficial. However, this era is that of governing miserliness and following of whims and personal opinions.**

A: It is not so; this is a description of most cases, not all of them. The obligation of reminding people is when they benefit from this reminder; otherwise, we are required to remind them hoping that they will benefit from it. Allah says in other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses), ﴾So remind them (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) - you are only one who reminds.﴿ ﴾And remind (by preaching the Qur'ân, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), for verily, the reminding profits the believers.﴿

One must remind others, but the benefit comes from Allah. However, if you are certain that the reminder is going to be beneficial, it becomes a greater obligation

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even doubly as important.

As for the claim that this era is one of miserliness, following whims and personal opinions, this is true. However, this does not mean that it is an era when people should be left without guidance because they are misers and they follow their personal opinions and whims. It is not an era when one should abandon Da`wah (calling to Islam) and keep to oneself. No, praise be to Allah, Da`wah is still beneficial and there are people who respond to it. We should call people to Allah and beware of miserliness, following whims and worldly distractions. We should not stop giving Da`wah unless a time comes when people are banned from Da`wah and punished for practicing it. Only then, one should care for oneself. Praise be to Allah, this does not apply to our time. On the contrary, enjoining Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect), forbidding Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and Da`wah are permissible. Because some people might commit mistakes in some issues. This does not mean they should be prevented from Da`wah. A person should follow the straight path and should not be discouraged from Da`wah. If a person is prevented from Da`wah because of their diversion from the straight path in some issues

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until they return to what is correct, this is the right of rulers. They should investigate these matters; ban those who do not abide by the way that should be followed and punish those who deviate from the straight path until they return to it again. This is considered cooperation in righteousness and piety. The State should fear Allah in this and seek Al-Haqq (the Truth). They should also consider the opinion of scholars and consult them. They should not allow anyone to speak, as they like. Some who call to Hellfire and spread evil might talk and spread discrepancy among people unjustly. The state should handle these matters in an Islamic way, as the Prophet Muhammad used to do, after consulting the people of knowledge so that the treatment is effective. If a mistake takes place, they should not condemn it, because everyone commits mistakes, whether a Da`y (caller to Islam), a person who enjoins Ma`ruf and forbids Munkar, the state, the judge or the ruler. All Banu Adam (human beings, descendents from Prophet Adam) are prone to committing mistakes but a Mu'min

(believer), the state, the ruler, the judge, a Da`y and the person who enjoins Ma`ruf and forbids Munkar should adhere persistently to Al-Haqq.

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No one is infallible and when one commits a mistake, it should be brought to their attention. If they become obstinate, the state should treat them accordingly, whether by convincing, discipline, or imprisonment until they stop being obstinate. If they accept Al-Haqq, praise be to Allah.

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Q 22: Some magazines publish pictures of singers, actresses and others whose corruption is quite clear.

A: The government should prevent distribution of singers' pictures and the advocates of evil. Those responsible for Hisbah (regulation of economic, commercial, and public matters) should stand together with Du`ah (callers to Islam) against them as a cooperation upon righteousness and piety. Also, the Ministry of Information should prevent this and concern itself spreading correct beliefs via all informational means; whether visual, audible, or in print. Those in charge of this ministry should fear Allah and carry out what pleases Him and keep away from what He forbade while the government monitors this. Scholars and righteous people should give a helping hand and cooperate in this regard and inform the government of any improprieties.

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Q 23: Which books you recommend for knowledge seekers to read on `Aqidah (creed)? What do you advise the Da`y (caller to Islam) who instructs Bedouins and laypeople, who need to learn the principles of `Aqidah?

A: The Qur'an is the greatest and most useful book on the subject of `Aqidah. It is Allah's book, which has a light and guidance. Everyone, young, old, male and female, is recommended to focus on the Qur'an and endeavor to memorize and recite it often. It includes the best illustration of `Aqidah, gives guidance and useful remedies. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿Verily, this Qur'ân guides to that which is most just and right﴾ And: ﴿Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing."﴾

It is a book of guidance to the right path. Every Muslim, male or female, Arab or non-Arab, is advised to hold fast to the Qur'an, glorify it, act upon its teachings and frequently recite it wherever they are from the Mus-haf and by heart.

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They should fulfill the obligations and shun the prohibitions. It is the best book of `Aqidah and good deeds. The Qur'an includes guidance, enlightenment, a call to doing all that is good and a warning against every evil. It calls to high moral standards and the best of deeds. It informs us about the events of preceding generations, good and evil, gives lessons from which we must take heed. As the second source, the Hadith books such as the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim), books written by Ahl-ul-Sunan (authors of Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes) should be studied to learn more about `Aqidah. The sound `Aqidah books written by Imams of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) should also be used for teaching people. Among them are the books written by the Salaf and Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah be merciful with them) and other scholars, who are known for their upright `Aqidah. In addition, the books written by Shaykh Muhammad ibn `Abdul-Wahhab (may Allah be merciful with him) and Imams of Islamic Da`wah which was widespread in Najd during the twelfth century

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are of great benefit. These books including Kitab Al-Tawhid, Kashf Al-Shubuhat, Thalathat 'Usul, Adab Al-Mashi ila Al-Salah, and the treatises of sheikhs in Al-Durar Al-Saniyyah. They contain useful material for people. You can also refer to Taysir Al-`Aziz Al-Hamid, which is a commentary on Kitab Al-Tawhid, by Shaykh Sulayman, Al-`Aqidah Al-Wasitiyyah by Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-Tadmuriyyah and Al-Hamawiyyah, Sharh Al-`Aqidah Al-Tahawiyyah and its commentaries by Ibn Abu Al-`Izz, and Lum`at Al-`Itqad by the author of Al-Mughni. There are many other books, which guide people to goodness and convey the truth.

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2- Outline of Islam

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creation and the good end is for Al-Muttaqin (the pious) and peace and blessings be upon His beloved Servant, Messenger, and His chosen one amongst His creatures, our Prophet, and leader Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, and upon his family and Companions and those who follow his example and guidance until the Day of Judgment.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) sent His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with guidance and the way of truth i.e. Islam, with which Allah sent all the Messengers. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm.﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) also says ﴾And whoever seeks a religion other than Islâm, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.﴿

Islam is the Din of Allah with which He sent all Messengers from Noah until the last of them; Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

It was the religion of our father Adam whom Allah sent for himself and his offspring as a Prophet with a Shari`ah, which He taught and legislated for him. He and his offspring held fast to it till Allah sent Prophet Noah (peace be upon him).

Islam means submitting oneself to Allah and obeying His orders and avoiding what He forbade. This is the Din of Islam.

The origin and basis of the Islam is Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He)) and devoting all worship to Allah alone (may He be Praised and Glorified). This is the basis of the Din of Islam: Worship is to be directed to Allah alone, including supplication, fear, hope, prayer, fasting, slaughtering sacrificial animals, vowing, and other rites. All this is to be offered for Allah Alone. Messengers were sent by Allah for this mission. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿

﴾Worship Allâh﴿ means testifying that none is worthy of worship except Allah. ﴾and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ namely, abandon the worship of all things other than Allah. Taghut refers to anything worshipped beside Allah, including trees, stones, idols, planets, etc. All these are considered Taghut (false gods).

If those worshipped do not agree to this, such as the Prophets, the angels, and the righteous people, then the Taghut (false gods) is Satan who calls for worshipping them and makes this seem fair to people, where the worshipped being is innocent of this.

The basis of the Islam is thus devotion of worship to Allah Alone without associating partners with Him and rejection of the worship of other than Him i.e. to condemn worshipping other than Him and to believe that this is false and Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).

This was the mission with which Allah sent all the Messengers from Noah until their last and seal Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Islam is the Shari`ah that Allah taught and legislated for Adam, who worshipped Allah alone. His offspring continued on his Din (peace be upon him) till some of them committed Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) during the time of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him).

Every Messenger informed his Ummah (community) that he was sent to command them to testify that there is no God except Allah and to devote worship to Him. Noah (peace be upon him) said to his people: ﴾Worship Allâh! You have no other Ilâh (God) but Him.﴿

The same message was conveyed by Prophets Hud, Salih, Shu'ayb, Ibrahim, Lut, and all other Prophets. They all said to their people: ﴾Worship Allâh! You have no other Ilâh (God) but Him. (Lâ ilâha illallâh: none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh).﴿

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Moses (peace be upon him) said to his people: ﴾Worship Allâh! You have no other Ilâh (God) but Him.﴿ ﴾Your Ilâh (God) is only Allâh, (the One) Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). He has full knowledge of all things.﴿ `Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary) (peace be upon him) also said to his people: ﴾Never did I say to them aught except what You (Allâh) did command me to say: 'Worship Allâh, my Lord and your Lord.'﴿

When Allah sent him, Muhammad (peace be upon him) also said to his people: ﴾Worship Allâh! You have no other Ilâh (God) but Him.﴿ He would teach them saying: ﴾O people! Say: There is no god but Allah so that you will be successful.﴿

This was the mission of all Prophets. They called the nations to testify that there is no God but Allah and to worship Him Alone and to supplicate Him Alone to fulfill their needs, to rely on Him Alone, to fear Him Alone, to hope for Paradise and ask Him Alone for it; to ask Him Alone to rescue them from the Fire, to seek sustenance and health from Him Alone, to fear, hope in, pray for, fast for, slaughter sacrificial animals, and vow for Him Alone hoping for His reward and fearing His punishment.

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Muhammad (peace be upon him) remained amongst his people in Makkah for ten years calling them, first of all, to testify that there is no God except Allah Alone and forbidding them from associating others with Him i.e. loving things other than Allah, such as trees, stones, idols, etc. He would say to them: ﴾O people, say: "There is no one who has the right to be worshipped except Allah," you will prosper.﴿

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It should be noted that caring for physical means is not Shirk (associating others with Allah in worship) and does not contradict Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism). These means refer to what is related to concrete means with living persons, which has nothing to do with Shirk. If one asks one's brother or some other person to do something, or help in doing something such as saying 'repair my car, work on my farm, fetch me something, or carry this heavy thing for me' while knowing that he has the ability to do so, then all these are material issues that have nothing to do with Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) and are not prohibited. Shirk takes place with regard to matters that should be offered to Allah Alone such as supplications, fear, hope. It does not pertain to concrete means with living persons who have power to achieve such matters. If one has a living brother, friend, or someone whom one needs and he says to him do such-and-such for me either in return for fees or not, then this has nothing to do with Shirk and does not contradict Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism).

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These are permissible concrete matters done by the Messengers and Muslims, which indicates that they have nothing to do with Shirk. If one says 'O so-and-so, do this, supplicate Allah for my forgiveness, or help me doing such-and-such thing' that are available to him through a letter, phone or telex, then this has nothing to do with Shirk.

However, it is an act of Shirk to supplicate the dead, an inanimate object, or an animate being whom one wrongly thinks it manages the affairs of the universe or has a certain power or characteristic enabling him to manage the affairs of the universe beside Allah. This is the very Shirk that the Messengers were sent to prohibit and warn against. As for the known concrete matters that one asks from other living persons who can achieve them, through speaking to them, or sending a letter or a telex or calling them on the phone, these are permissible physical matters that are not prohibited and have anything to do with Shirk. In Surah Al-Qasas, Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe﴿

This should be made clear because this may be unknown to some ignorant people.

It also should be known that it is fundamental of Islam to believe in

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Muhammad (peace be upon him) and that he is Allah's Messenger whom Allah sent to all people, and in all the past Messengers. This is a condition for the validity of one's Islam and for judging others as Muslims, thus one must acknowledge belief in the past Messengers. A Muslim should believe that Allah sent Noah. As for Prophet Hud, a Muslim must believe that Allah sent him to his people and must believe in Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) and to devote worship to Allah Alone.

A Muslim should believe that Allah sent all the following Prophets, each at his time: Prophet Salih, Su`ayb, Ibrahim, Lut, Yusuf (Joseph), Ishaq (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), and Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) upon whom Allah sent the Tawrah (Torah). A Muslim has to believe in these Prophets as well as in Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) and sincerely devote worship to Allah and believe that Musa (Moses) and Harun (Aaron) are two of the Prophets and Messengers of Allah.

If one believes in the Oneness of Allah and fulfills His commands but does not believe in all Prophets, then one's Islam is invalid.

Those coming after `Isa ibn Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary) who was sent by Allah must believe in him. The Jews, who did not believe in `Isa, became disbelievers, because of their disbelief in `Isa. Even if they believed in the Oneness of Allah and worshipped Him, and observed fasting and prayer, they cannot be judged as Muslims unless they believe in the Messenger they

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had at their time or before them and they knew that he was sent by Allah, such as `Isa (peace be upon him).

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) succeeded Prophet `Isa, therefore it is obligatory to believe in him. Whoever does not believe in him is a disbeliever, even if believing in all the past Messengers. It is obligatory to believe in Muhammad (peace be upon him) and in what Allah sent him with to all people, including jinn and human beings. It is obligatory also to believe in the Oneness of Allah and to be sincerely devoted to Him. It is obligatory to believe in all the Messengers with our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) being the last and best of them. It is obligatory to believe in him and believe that he is truly Allah's Messenger to the inhabitants of the two worlds and that he is the Seal of Prophets, after whom there is no Prophet. Regarding those who came after Muhammad (peace be upon him) (those living at his time and after him), they can achieve their Islam only through this. They cannot be Muslims unless believing in all Prophets from the time of Adam till Muhammad (peace be upon him). It is obligatory to believe in them, their truthfulness, and that they are Allah's Prophets, who conveyed what was revealed to them by Allah, and spared no effort in fulfilling the Trust and advising the Ummah. It is obligatory to believe in all this and in the seal Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

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It is a must to believe that he (peace be upon him) conveyed the Message, fulfilled the Trust, advised the Ummah, and performed his duties until he met his Lord, and to believe that he is the Last Prophet after whom there is no other Prophet and that he was sent by Allah to the two worlds i.e. the jinn and human beings. Thus, every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) from both worlds are obliged to believe in him and to follow his Shari`ah (peace be upon him). They are considered Muslims and can acquire Islam only through this.

Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾Say (O Muslims), "We believe in Allâh and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrâhîm (Abraham), Ismâ'îl (Ishmael), Ishâq (Isaac), Ya'qûb (Jacob), and to Al-Asbât [the offspring of the twelve sons of Ya'qûb (Jacob)], and that which has been given to Mûsâ (Moses) and 'Isâ (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islâm)."﴿

Allah (may He be Praised) made it clear that it is obligatory for the Mukallaf of this Ummah to believe in all the Messengers and what they brought. Allah (May He be Glorified and Exalted) says: ﴾"And ordain for us good in this world, and in the Hereafter. Certainly we have turned unto You." He said: (As to) My punishment I afflict therewith whom I will and My Mercy embraces all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who are the Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2), and give Zakât; and those who believe in Our Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs and revelations, etc.);﴿ ﴾Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) whom they find written with them in the Taurât (Torah) (Deut, xviii 15) and the Injeel (Gospel) (John xiv, 16), - he commands them for Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that

Islâm has ordained); and forbids them from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); he allows them as lawful At-Tayyibât (i.e. all good and lawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, foods), and prohibits them as unlawful Al-Khabâ'ith (i.e. all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons and foods), he releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allâh's Covenant with the children of Israel), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur'ân) which has been sent down with him, it is they who will be successful.﴿

Then Allah said: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allâh﴿ In another Ayah (Qur'anic verse), Allah says: ﴾And We have not sent you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind﴿

This indicates that it is obligatory to believe in all Messengers and that Allah sent them as givers of glad tidings and warners, Allah (Glorified be He) says ﴾Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning﴿ They are sent to all mankind, each Prophet was sent to his people to warn them and give glad tidings; give them glad tidings of Paradise if they obey and remain on the right course and to warn them against the Fire, if they do not respond. Muhammad (peace be upon him) also was sent by Allah as a giver of glad tidings

and a warner, to give glad tidings of Paradise, prosperity, dignity, and power to the Ummah if they respond to the call and to warn them against the Fire, failure, loss and despite if they contradict his command and do not abide by what was revealed to him (peace be upon him).

Consequently, it should be known that it is obligatory to believe in all the Messengers and that it is obligatory for those who knew about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to believe in him and his message and submit themselves to his Shari`ah. Thus, through this way one can be said to have embraced Islam, because Islam means submitting oneself to Allah's command and believing in Him. This is why it is called Islam: ﴾Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm.﴿ Islam means submission. To submit oneself to someone is to surrender before and obey him.

The Muslims are those who abide by and obey the command of Allah brought by His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as stated in His Glorious Book. This is the only way to enter Islam. One cannot be considered a Muslim or having Islam except after achieving this i.e. believing the past Messengers, believing in what they brought, and believing in Muhammad (peace be upon him) and abiding by the sanctified Shari`ah he brought out of love, sincerity,

truth, hope and fear, not by lying, Riya' (showing-off) or hypocrisy.

Every Messenger of Allah (peace be upon them) informed his Ummah (community) of every good he knew for them and advised and guided them. Also, they informed them of every evil they knew. This was done by every Messenger, because Messengers were the wisest among people and had the most perfect faith among them. Every Messenger conveyed his message to his people and invited them to the good he knew for them with regard to their Din and worldly life, and warned them against every evil he knew with regard to their Din and worldly life. It is authentically reported that the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (peace be upon him), said: ﴾It is the duty of every Prophet

whom Allah sent to guide his followers to what he knew was good for them and warn them against what he knew was bad for them.) (Related by Imam Muslim in his book of Sahih (authentic) Hadith).

Thus, our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) informed his followers of what he knew was good for them and warned them against what he knew was bad for them. He invited them to high moral standards and the best of deeds and warned them against bad manners and evil deeds, which was done by the Messengers before him (peace and blessings be upon them). He

(peace be upon him) said: (I was sent to perfect good character.) Another narration reads: (to perfect good morals) Allah sent him to call people to high moral standards and the best of deeds and warn them against bad manners and evil deeds.

He explained to people the Attributes of their Lord and Creator, instructed them to believe in His Oneness, to be sincerely devoted to Him and to believe in the Messengers. The Messengers (peace be upon them) would also inform them about what Allah prepared for them in Paradise and what He prepared in the Hellfire for those disobeying Him. All this is necessary for one to have perfect `Aqidah (creed) of Islam. Not only did the Prophets explain to people the rights of right, His Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism), and His Attributes and Names (may He be Praised), but they also explain other requirements of `Aqidah (creed), including believing in Allah's angels that He created to worship Him, who are created from light, and that they all are honored Servants as Allah (Exalted be He) said: (but honoured slaves.) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) created them to worship and obey Him. He created them from light and made them carry out His commands pertaining to His servants. The Messengers conveyed to people what was revealed to them by the angels, so that people should believe in these honored angels created by Allah to obey Him and carry out His commands and believe that angels are created from light, human beings are created

from mud, and jinn are created from fire. Creatures can be classified into three categories: Angels are created from light, jinn are created from fire, and human beings are created from earth.

Messengers clarified this and this was stated in the Divine Books, such as Tawrah (Torah), the Bible, the Psalms and the Qur'an. Messengers explained also what pertains to the revealed Books, including Tawrah (Torah), the Bible, etc.

They explained also the outcome of this, regarding the affairs of the Hereafter, Resurrection, Reckoning, Retribution, standing before Allah on the Last Day, and that people will rise out of their graves and will be reckoned based on their deeds: Whoever obeys and abides by what the Messengers came with, will enter Paradise at the Last Day. It is a good abode containing what the souls desire and the eyes delight in. It is an abode that Allah prepared for those who obey Him. It has all kinds of good and prosperity. It has an endless life free from all kinds of trouble, illness, death, sadness, urination, or excretion. It is an everlasting pleasure and endless life for those fearing Allah and obeying the Messengers. There is another abode that is the dwelling of the Fire and torment that is prepared by Allah for those who disobeyed the Messengers and did not abide by what they brought. For these is the latter abode, which is the abode of humiliation and punishment whose dwellers will be in

everlasting torment: (Neither will it have a complete killing effect on them so that they die, nor shall its torment be lightened for them. Thus do We requite every disbeliever!) On the other hand, the

dwellers of Paradise will be in eternal bliss, good and health as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ("Truly! The Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2) will be amidst Gardens and water-springs (Paradise).) ("(It will be said to them): 'Enter therein (Paradise), in peace and security.') ("And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have). (So they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones.) ("No sense of fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave it.")

Regarding Hellfire, Allah said: (Verily, the Mujrimûn (criminals, sinners, disbelievers) will be in the torment of Hell to abide therein forever.) ((The torment) will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regrets, sorrows and in despair therein.) (We wronged them not, but they were the Zâlimûn (polytheists, wrong-doers).) (And they will cry: "O Malik (Keeper of Hell)! Let your Lord make an end of us." He will say: "Verily, you shall abide forever.") i.e. they will remain in the abode of disdain and fire. In the other Ayah, Allah says: (Neither will it have a complete killing effect on them so that they die, nor shall its torment be lightened for them. Thus do We requite every disbeliever!) Allah (Glorified be He) also says

about them: (Verily whoever comes to his Lord as a Mujrim (criminal, polytheist, sinner, disbeliever in the Oneness of Allâh and His Messengers), then surely, for him is Hell, wherein he will neither die nor live.)

Allah (may He be Praised) explained through Messengers the end of the pious people following the Messengers i.e. Paradise and honor in the abode wherein Allah prepared for them all that the souls desire and the eyes delight in. There will be rivers, beautiful and fair wives, kinds of meats, good drinks, clothes, and other types of pleasures.

However, He prepared another abode that was explained by the Messengers and Allah in His Books. It is the abode of disdain, misery, and torment. This abode was prepared for those who contradict the Messengers and do not abide by what they brought. One's Islam can only be complete through this belief. The servant, man or woman, cannot be a Muslim except with this belief, i.e. believing in Resurrection, Calling to Account, Retribution, Paradise, and Fire and that Paradise was prepared by Allah for those who followed the Messengers, whereas Hellfire was prepared by Him for those who opposed them.

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It is also necessary to have perfect Faith to believe in the Divine Decree as stated in the Qur'anic Ayahs and Prophetic Hadiths.

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One should believe that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) knew, recorded, and kept account of all things before their existence and that He is the Creator and founder of all things and that what Allah wills comes to pass and what He does not will does not come to pass. Belief in Devine Decree includes four things:

Believing that Allah knew everything before their existence, that He recorded them with Him (Glorified and Exalted be He), that He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Creator of what He brought forth from them after His will and power, and that what Allah wills comes to pass and what He does not will does not come to pass. These are four matters pertaining to Devine Decree:

(1) Believing that Allah (may He be Praised) knew everything before its existence and that His Knowledge encompasses all what happened and what will happen: ﴾Verily, Allâh is the All-Knower of everything.﴿

﴾that you may know that Allâh has power over all things, and that Allâh surrounds all things in (His) Knowledge.﴿

(2) Believing that Allah recorded these things because He (Glorified and Exalted be He) already recorded everything as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Know you not that Allâh knows all that is in the heaven and on the earth? Verily, it is (all) in the Book (Al-Lauh-al-Mahfûz).﴿

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Allah (Glorified be He) also says ﴾No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfûz) before We bring it into existence.﴿

(3) Believing that whatever Allah willed to be shall be and whatever Allah did not will, shall not be. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾If your Lord had so willed, they would not have done it﴿

(4) Believing that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Creator Who brought all creatures into existence: ﴾Allâh is the Creator of all things﴿

All this falls under believing in Divine Decree, which is one of the basic principles of Iman (Faith) that we explained previously. Once asked by Gabriel about faith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾To have faith in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Day of Resurrection.﴿ Regarding the Last Day, we have previously mentioned that the Prophet referred to standing before Allah, being called to account, retribution, Paradise and the Fire. All this falls under the Last Day. ﴾And [To have faith] in the Divine Decree, whether good or evil.﴿ This means that Allah knew,

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recorded, and kept account of all things. Thus, what Allah wills comes to pass and what He does not will does not come to pass. It is Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) Who is the Creator of all things and the Lord of every thing.

It is obligatory for a Muslim to believe in and be firmly convinced of these six principles and that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is Able to do all things and that He is Aware of all things.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) informed the Companions about Devine Decree and that Allah recorded everything, they asked him: ﴿O Messenger of Allah, if Allah has already recorded everything, then what is the value of what we do. He (peace be upon him) said: "Carry on doing (good) deeds, for everybody will find easy to do such deeds as will lead him to his destined place for which he was created. So he who is destined to be among the happy (in the Hereafter), will find it easy to do the deeds characteristic of such people, while he who is destined to be among the miserable, will find it easy to do the deeds characteristic of such people." Then, he (peace be upon him) recited the following Ayah from Surah Al-Layl: ﴿As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allâh and fears Him, and believes in Al-Husnâ, We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness). But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient and denies Al-Husnâ, We will make smooth for him the path for evil.﴾ ﴾

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This was the explanation of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to them. This means that Allah predestined and recorded all matters and that it is He (may He be Praised) Who grants success and guides whomever He wills. Thus, a servant has to work diligently and ask Allah to grant him success and has to choose what is good for one, because Allah (Exalted be He) endowed one with reason to distinguish between good and evil and guidance and misguidance. Allah distinguished man from animals with this great reason and will. Thus, one must choose what is good asking one's Lord to guide one to it. One has to do what is good and refrain from evil asking Allah's protection from it and beware of it and warning others against it.

Through His Messengers (peace be upon them), Allah (Exalted be He) commanded the servants to continue to do what is good asking Allah to guide them to it and grant them success to remain upon it. On the other hand, they have to beware and keep away from evil asking Allah to protect them from it. Such were the instructions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Muslims.

It is sufficient to mention this general definition of Islam in this episode. Next episode in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), we will give mention of the Islamic laws that Messengers conveyed and taught to people after informing them about the `Aqidah (creed) that they must believe in, and in

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what the Messengers (peace be upon them) conveyed in general. Regarding detailing the matters of Shari`ah, including Salah, Zakah, Sawm (fasting), Hajj, Jihad, etc. and the other legislations pertaining to abandoning what is prohibited by Allah, we will handle this in another episode in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills). We will explain types of legislation and that Messengers began with the `Aqidah (creed) pertaining to hearts and faith, then they explained Islamic laws that Messengers conveyed after Allah's command (Glorified and Exalted be He), so that people will put them into action and adhere to them. These laws can be divided into actions and sayings to be fulfilled by every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) and other actions that must be abandoned.

Thus, laws are actions to be done and other actions are to be abandoned. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent with the most perfect Shari`ah and Allah sent him to perfect high moral standards. Next episode we will discuss this in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).

May Allah (may He be Praised) grant us all success in what pleases Him and set right our hearts and deeds and guide us to His Straight Way! He is All-Hearing, Ever Near! May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and Companions!

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Questions

Q 1: A Christian asks, "How can I be sure that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the last Prophet and that what he came with is the right religion revealed by Allah?

A: Making sure of this is possible through many things including Allah's Declaration in the Qur'an that Muhammad is the last Prophet and also the statement of the Prophet Muhammad that he is the last of Prophets. If one believes that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger and that the Qur'an is right, one will definitely believe that he is the last of Prophets for the Qur'an states this. Also, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾I am the seal of prophets.﴿

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allâh and the last (end) of the Prophets.﴿

Hadith are reported in the manner of Tawatur (a significant number of narrators whose agreement upon a lie is impossible) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: ﴾I am the seal of prophets and there is no prophet after me.﴿ Whoever believes that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger due to the miracles

that occurred at his hand; at the top of which is the Qur'an, which proves the truthfulness of the Prophet (peace be upon him), as it is impossible to be narrated by any human being, especially when he is an illiterate person while the well versed writer or reader cannot do it due to what it includes of great rulings and facts of the unseen, perfect and exact eloquence, and what it relates of facts about the Day of Judgment and the afterlife that can never be known except by a truthful person taught by Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified).

There were other miracles that took place at his hands such as the splitting of the moon which is a great miracle Allah granted especially to him with. Also, among these miracles is the flowing of water from between his fingers and hundreds of people viewed this many times, and blessing a small amount of food for which the Prophet supplicated Allah until it sufficed hundreds of people while it was only enough for two or three personas and other miracles. Whoever believes in his prophethood and that the Qur'an is the Word of Allah, will be sure that the Prophet Muhammad is the last of Prophets.

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Q2 : You say that a Muslim believes in all the Messengers of Allah and makes no distinction between them; yet the formula of the Shahadah (Testimony of Faith) through which one enters into Islam is: I testify that there is no deity but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Does not this involve rejecting the other Prophets?

A: This is to be stated by one at the beginning of one's embracing Islam because Muhammad is the last Prophet in whom one is ordered to believe before speaking about the other Prophets. Regarding people to whom Muhammad was sent, they must confess this Shahadah (Testimony of Faith) testifying that there is no deity except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Then one is to be informed about what relates to all the Messengers and belief in them. Furthermore, one should be informed about the angels, the Books, Paradise and Hell. Testifying that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah is as necessary as testifying that there is no deity except Allah in order for one to be considered a Muslim. Then one is to be informed about the rest of the rites in Islam. The same applies to the time of Prophet 'Isa (Jesus), i.e. one was to be informed about Prophet 'Isa (Jesus) and what he brought. Then one was to be informed about past Prophets to believe in them. The same applies to the time of Prophet Musa (Moses) and all the Prophets preceding him, i.e. one was to be informed about the Messenger sent to one at one's time to believe in him and to testify that there is no God but Allah, to believe in the other Messengers, and then to believe in the other matters of faith regarding Paradise, Hellfire, the angels, and the Books.

This should follow one's belief in the Messenger sent at one's time. Since Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the last Messenger, it is obligatory upon people both during his time and after to believe in him first and testify that there is no God but Allah. After believing in him, there is the belief in the Messengers preceding him, as it is he who informed them. Thus, one can believe in the previous Prophets only after believing in this Prophet who informed about them. In other words, believing in this Messenger means believing in the other Messengers.

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Q 3: It is mentioned in the Qur'an that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) created the heavens and the earth in six days. Would you please explain this matter, given that we know it is enough for Allah to say: ﴾"Be!" - and it is.﴿ **?**

A: Allah (Glorified be He) created the heavens, the earth, and what is between them in six days. He stated so, and He is the Truthful One (Glorified and Exalted be He). He could have created them in a moment, as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) states: ﴾Verily, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be!" - and it is!﴿ However,

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the scholars (may Allah be merciful with them) said that He created them in six days in order to teach His Servants deliberation and patience. Their Lord who knows everything and is Omnipotent did not in a hurry create the heavens and the earth, but he created them in six days. He was not hasten to create Adam or other creatures; He managed them very well in order to teach His Servants how to manage their affairs patiently, systematically, perfectly, with deep insight and knowledge, and without hastening or disorder. He (Glorified be He) is Omnipotent; however, He was not in a hurry and created them in six days although He was able to do in a minute or a moment. ﴾Verily, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be!" - and it is!﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) made them organized and systematic in a few days in order to teach His Servants how to work and organize their affairs patiently; so that their affairs are set right in a way that brings benefit and repels harm from them.

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Allah (Glorified be He) explained this in many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses). He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And He it is Who has created the heavens and the earth in six Days and His Throne was on the water, that He might try you, which of you is the best in deeds.﴿ He told us that He created them to test us and find who is going to work better and perfect deeds more, as a hasty person might perform things improperly. Allah created the world in six days to teach His Servants how to perfect their deeds and not do them hastily, so that their affairs are not disturbed. ﴾And He it is Who has created the heavens and the earth in six Days and His Throne was on the water, that He might try you, which of you is the best in deeds.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾Verily! We have made that which is on earth as an adornment for it, in order that We may test them (mankind) as to which of them are best in deeds. [i.e. those who do good deeds in the most perfect manner, that means to do them (deeds) totally for Allâh's sake and in accordance to the legal ways of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم].﴿ He created everything on the earth, whether mountains, trees, plants, animal, minerals and so on to test the people and see who is going to use what is on earth best.

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He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾Who has created death and life that He may test you which of you is

best in deed.)

In these Ayahs and others which carry the same meaning, there is evidence that Allah (Glorified be He) created these things in that period of time and in that systematic way to test His Servants and see who would be best in deeds, not those who achieve most. What matters is quality and perfection, not quantity.

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Q 4: Does Islam disallow women's work or business?

A: Islam does not disallow women's work or trade as Allah (Glorified be He) has made work lawful for His Servants and commanded them to work where He says:﴾ And say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) "Do deeds! Allâh will see your deeds, and (so will) His Messenger and the believers.﴿ He also Says: ﴾that He may test you which of you is best in deed.﴿ This includes both men and women. Moreover, it is allowable for men and women to conduct business. It is a commandment from Allah to everyone, whether man or woman, to trade and seek sustenance. He (may He be Exalted and Glorified) says: ﴾O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent.﴿

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This includes both men and women. Also, Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And get two witnesses out of your own men. And if there are not two men (available), then a man and two women, such as you agree for witnesses, so that if one of them (two women) errs, the other can remind her. And the witnesses should not refuse when they are called (for evidence). You should not become weary to write it (your contract), whether it be small or big, for its fixed term, that is more just with Allâh; more solid as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves, save when it is a present trade which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, then there is no sin on you if you do not write it down.﴿ Also, these Ayahs (Verses from the Qur'an) apply to men and women to the same degree. Allah commands us to write down debts and to take witnesses in case of debts in general. The, Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾save when it is a present trade which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, then there is no sin on you if you do not write it down.﴿ Then, He commands to bring witnesses and hence He says after that: ﴾But take witnesses whenever you make a commercial contract.﴿

All of these rulings apply to men and women for there is no discrimination between men and women in matters of recording debts, trade, and taking witnesses.

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Allah orders us to take witnesses on selling and trading and to write down transactions except in case of trade that is carried out on the spot for it is concluded immediately and therefore there is no harm on neglecting to record it. All these rulings apply to men and women equally. The same is true for the Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in which he said: ﴾Both parties in a business transaction have the right to annul it so long as they have not separated; and if they speak the truth and make everything clear they will be blessed in their transaction; but if they lie and conceal anything the blessing of their transaction will be wiped out.﴿ Allah ((may He be Praised and Exalted) says: ﴾whereas Allâh has permitted trading and forbidden Ribâ (usury).﴿ This applies to all of them.

However, a great care should be given to mixing between men and women at work and in business for it should be free of all what leads to problems and wrongdoings. A woman's work or business should not include mingling with men in a way that leads to Fitnah (temptation) on either part of in

addition to observing Hijab (veil), decency and keeping away from

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all causes of Fitnah. This is not confined to selling and buying, but in every matter of life for Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance﴿ ﴾And when you ask (his wives) for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen: that is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.﴿ ﴾O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (i.e. screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way).﴿ Also, there is no harm in the selling and purchasing carried out between women and men separately and similarly in case of work. For example, a female doctor treats women and a male doctor treats men, and similarly in education. However, that a man treats a woman or vice versa, this is by no means allowed by Shari`ah (Islamic law) because of what it involves of Fitnah and corruption.

A woman like man is permitted to work but it must not endanger one's religion or honor,

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nor lead to corruption or Fitnah. Work should be free of anything that harms one's religion and this may result from mixing between men and women in work or trade. Moreover, there are certain jobs for each one of them that involve no harm to them or the community at large.

If there is a necessity that causes woman to assume the work of man or a man the work of a woman; such as treating a woman for a male doctor due to the unavailability of a female doctor or the latter treating a man if there is no male doctor and she can diagnose the illness and define the medicine; in this case, it is allowable for them to carry out what is required while observing decency and avoiding the causes of Fitnah, Khulwah (being alone with a member of the opposite sex) and the like.

Accordingly, in case of necessity it is allowable for a woman to work with men and vice versa, but both must avoid causes of Fitnah such as Khulwah, unveiling and the like; and finally this is by way of exclusion.

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An example of this is that a woman treats a man if there are no male doctors and similarly a man if there is no female doctor to treat the women. However, this should be done in a way that involves no Khulwah or Fitnah. This applies to a woman going to the market, Masjid (mosque), and elsewhere for she should be decent, wear Hijab and observe all that protects against Fitnah such as praying in the last rows behind men in a Masjid, etc. However, in order to permit a woman to be in one place with men, this is conditioned on the improbility of Fitnah and harm on either the man or woman.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed women at times and reminded them of Allah and the Hereafter. It is reported that ﴾whenever Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) finished the Khutbah of the `Eid Prayer and instructed the men (about their Deen), he would go to the women, instruct them and guide them to the good.﴿ Also, at times he used to meet them, remind them of Allah and the Hereafter, taught them Deen (religion) and answered their questions. Thus, it is allowable for men to do so while observing decency,

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and avoiding causes of corruption. If there is a need for a man to remind a women of Allah and teach

them while observing they are veiled to protect them against Fitnah, there is no harm in this.

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Q 5: Is it necessary that a wife be of the same faith of her husband who is a Muslim?

A: This needs some explaination. If the husband is a Muslim and the woman is from the People of the Book (i.e. a Christian or Jew) and chaste, there is no harm on variance of beliefs for it is permissible for a Muslim man to marry a woman from the People of the Book whether the Jews or Christians as Allah permitted this. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibât [all kinds of Halâl (lawful) foods, which Allâh has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them. (Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before your time when you have given their due Mahr (bridal-money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), desiring chastity (i.e. taking them in legal wedlock) not committing illegal sexual intercourse, nor taking them as girl-friends.﴿ If a Muslim proposes to a woman from the People of the Book and she is known for her chastity and marries her, there is no harm in this.

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If she is a disbeliever from other than the Jews and Christians, it is not allowable to marry her for Allah permitted for Muslims only women from the People of the Book. Allah says in another Ayah (Qur'anic verse): ﴾And do not marry Al-Mushrikât (idolatresses, etc.) till they believe (worship Allâh Alone).﴿ --- ﴾And give not (your daughters) in marriage to Al-Mushrikûn till they believe (in Allâh Alone)﴿ This is in Surah-Al-Baqarah and He says in Surah-Al-Mumtahanah: ﴾They are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful (husbands) for them.﴿ The basic ruling is that it is not permissible for a Muslim man to marry a disbelieving woman nor is it allowable for a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim. Both husband and wife should be of the same faith except in the case of a Muslim man and a woman from the People of the Book, provided that she is chaste. If a woman from the People of the book is known to be chaste, there is no harm to marry her for Allah legislated this in Surah-Al-Ma'idah; however, other non-Muslim women are not eligible for marriage, such as Buddhists, pagans, communists, etc. On the other hand, a Muslim woman is in no way permitted to marry a non-Muslim. The exclusion of the rule of similar faith is in only in the case of non-Muslim women marrying Muslim men.

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A Muslim man is allowed to marry a woman from the People of the Book while a female Muslim is only permitted to marry a Muslim man. Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) says: ﴾They are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers nor are the disbelievers lawful (husbands) for them.﴿ ﴾And give not (your daughters) in marriage to Al-Mushrikûn﴿ He means not to marry them till they believe in Islam.

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Q 6: Is visiting the graves of the Awliya' (pious people) permissible in Islam?

A: This matter requires explanation. It is permissible to visit the graves of Awliya' and Muslims in general since it reminds people of death and the Hereafter and to supplicate for the deceased and seek Allah's Forgiveness for them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Visit the graves for they remind you of the Hereafter﴿ When visiting the graves, the Prophet used to teach the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) to say: ﴾As-Salamu 'alaikum ahla ad-diyari minal-Mu'minin wal-Muslimin, wa inna in sha' Allahu bikum lahiqun, nas'alu allaha lana wa-lakum al-'afiyah (Peace be upon you all, oh dwellers of the graves amongst the believers and Muslims. Truly, if Allah wills, we will join you. May Allah have mercy upon those who are already dead and those whom He gives respite. We implore Allah to grant well-being for both us and you).﴿

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This is the Shar`y (Islamically lawful) visit, however, women are excluded because the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed women who visit graves. Accordingly, this indicates that it is only exclusive to men. Visiting graves for women and men was prohibited in the early days of Islam for people at that time used to attach themselves to the dead; so Allah has prohibited grave visitation for both genders. Later, both men and women were given the permission to do so. Then finally, it settled on prohibiting it for women and allowing it for men. This is because it is difficult for women to control their emotions, thus subjecting them to Fitnah (trial) when visiting graves and remembering their relatives, friends, husbands, etc. Thus, it is Allah's Wisdom to prevent them from visiting graves so as they are not subjected to Fitnah or lead others to it.

However, He (Exalted be He) approved it for men to remind them of the Hereafter, seek forgiveness and mercy for the deceased. Even if they are Kafirs (disbeliever), it is permissible to visit their graves as a reminder without saluting or supplicating for them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did this when he visited the grave of his mother who died during the time of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance). He also sought Allah's Permission to seek her forgiveness, but he was prohibited from doing that, therefore he only visited her grave as a reminder.

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The aim of visiting the graves of Muslims is to supplicate and seek Allah's Forgiveness for the deceased, remember death and the Hereafter. While visiting the graves of Kafirs is only meant for as a warning.

On the other hand, it is not permissible to visit the dead to supplicate, appeal to, vow by them or seek their help. It is also not permissible to wipe over and circumambulate around the graves. Regrettably, this is practiced by some ignorant people who go to the graves to ask the deceased for help and appeal to them. A vivid example of this can be viewed in respect of what some people do with Al-Badawy, Al-Husayn, Sheikh `Abdul-Qadir in Iraq or others, and this is certainly not permissible.

In conclusion, there are two types of visit: the first is a Shar`i visit, while the second is a Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and prohibited. The Shar`i visit includes going to the graves to seek Allah's

Mercy and Forgiveness for the dead and to remember death and the Hereafter. This visit is required and ordained.

Whereas the other is an abhorred Bid`ah because it involves supplicating and appealing to the deceased, seeking their intercession,

or wiping over, circumambulating or praying at the graves. This type of visit is not allowed. Such deeds, however, are of different nature, for some of which are Bid`ah-related acts while others are Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). For example, praying at the graves and sitting by them to supplicate is an act of Bid`ah. As for circumambulating around them to seek intercession or benefit, supplicate or vow, or appeal to them, or seek their help; this is a major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam) which Allah has prohibited and forbidden for His Servants.

May Allah grant us all success to do that which pleases Him and set aright our intentions! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his Companions.

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3- A Lecture on the topic of `Aqidah

All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions, and those who follow his guidance. To proceed:

In His Noble Book (the Qur`an), Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) Who is the Most-Truthful says:

(And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).) (I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures).) (Verily, Allâh is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong.) This Ayah indicates that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) created man and Jinn (creatures created from fire) to worship Him Alone without partners. `Ibadah (worship) implies expressing Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah) and obedience to Allah and observing His Shari`ah (Law). It also implies Islam, Iman (Faith), guidance, righteousness and Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared). Allah (may He be Praised) commanded us to worship Him saying: (O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious).)

He (Exalted be He) also says: (Worship Allâh and join none with Him (in worship)) And: (And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.) i.e. He ordered and recommended. He (may He be Praised) says: (And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)) He sent the messengers (peace be upon them) to call people to worship Him. He (Exalted be He) says: (And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh).")

It is obligatory upon every human and Jinn, male or female, young or old, Arab or non-Arab, rich or poor, king or individual, to worship Allah alone devotedly and sincerely. These acts of worship which include Salah, Sawm (Fast), Du`a' (supplication), Hajj and etc. should be done with love, obedience, truthfulness, fear, and desire. There is no one truly worthy of worship but Allah!

He (may He be Praised) says: (That is because Allâh — He is the Truth (the only True God of all that exists, Who has no partners or rivals with Him), and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him, it is Bâtil (falsehood).)

The acts of worship include Salah, Sawm, Zakah, Hajj, Sadaqah (voluntary charity), `Umrah (Lesser pilgrimage), Jihad (fighting/striving in the Cause of Allah), etc. Mankind and Jinn are obliged to worship Allah alone hoping for His Mercy and fearing His Punishment. They should advise one

another to observe these acts. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression.﴿ And: ﴾By Al-'Asr (the time).﴿ ﴾Verily, man is in loss,﴿ ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿ Allah, the Most-Truthful, swears that all of mankind are lost, except those who believe, perform righteous deeds and advise each other with the truth and patience. These are the joyful winners. It should be noted that Allah swears by any of His Creatures He wishes as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) swears by

the mountain, star, winds and the night when it falls, etc.. However, His Servants must not to swear by anything other than Allah. The noble Prophet (peace be upon him) stated in the Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith): ﴾Whoever must take an oath should swear by Allah or remain silent. (i.e., He should not swear by other than Allah.)﴿ And: ﴾Whoever swears by anything other than Allah commits Shirk.﴿

It is not permissible to swear by anyone; such as the prophets, other humans, or anything except Allah. It is not either permissible to swear by the Prophet, by Al-Amanah (honesty, trust, and obedience), by the honor or life of so and so. If it is necessary, a Muslim must swear by Allah alone.

As for our Lord, He swears by whatever He pleases. This short, yet magnificent, Surah explains that all people, male and female, human and Jinn, Arabs and non-Arabs, are in loss, except those who believe, commit righteous deeds and advise each other with the truth and patience. These are the joyful winners who believe in Allah and His Messenger.

They believe in Allah as their Lord and the only One to be worshipped; and in all that Allah and His Messenger informed us of and ordered in the Qur'an and Sunnah. They thus perform righteous deeds; they fulfill Allah's Obligations and refrain from Allah's Prohibitions and observed His Limits. They give mutual advice to each other; enjoin Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and forbid Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect); and uphold this. These will be victorious and content. We ask Allah to make us and our Muslim brothers among these people; and to guide us to understand and hold fast to this religion. We ask Him also to make us and you among His successful and righteous Servants for He is Most Generous, Most Kind! May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions and those who follow them in piety and righteousness!

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Questions

Q 1: In this country, car insurance is mandatory by law. If a one has a car accident, is it permissible to submit a claim for the car repairs on the insurance?

A: If it is compulsory and a person has no choice, they should not take more than what they paid because this is a form of gambling. For example, if a person pays ten thousands to an insurance company, they should only take ten thousands only and if they pay four thousands, they should take four thousands only; for it is not permissible to accept any profit. If one receives an additional amount it should given it in charity.

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Q 2: If one has an accident, but does not take anything from the insurance company and compensates the other party, is it permissible for the insurance company to give the value of the insurance to the other party?

A: This should be thoroughly investigated, because this kind of transaction is usury. However, if one is paid more than the value of insurance, it is impermissible to take it. One should give away any extra amount and this will be better. If one is forced and has no other option, there is no harm in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).

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Q 3: In this country, some ex-Christian women who became atheists marry Muslim men. Is this permissible?

A: If these women turn from Christianity to atheism or communism, it is not permissible for Muslim men to marry them. They must be Christians so that their marriage becomes permissible. However, if they turn to communism and such, they are no longer considered from the People of the Book.

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Q 4: Some Muslim men have illegal relations with foreign women, and sometimes these women become pregnant and give birth to children. Do these children take the names of their fathers, especially if the couple marries later? Does she have rights that he has to fulfill if they do not marry or she refuses to marry him if he becomes Multazim (a practicing Muslim)?

A: He should perform Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and the child assumes the name of their mother, not their father, because it is an illegitimate child. This is the opinion of the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars) which follows Al-Haqq (the Truth) according to the Hadith which states: ﴿The child is for the bed (i.e. for the owner of the bed; the husband or the master of a slave girl), and stoning is for the adulterer.﴾

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Q 5: Some Muslim women marry non-Muslim men, what is the ruling on such marriages? Are the women considered to be Kafirs (non-Muslims)? Are the children born from this marriage acknowledged as legal progeny?

A: This marriage is Batil (null and void). If the couple were not aware of the invalidity of this marriage when contracting it, the children born from this marriage are attributed to the father; since they deemed the contract valid when contracting it. If they know the ruling on the marriage, they have committed fornication and the children born from this marriage will not be acknowledged as legitimate offspring.

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Q 6: Some Muslim men have illegal relations with non-Muslim women. If they marry them, will these women be chaste and marriageable, especially that they do not repent of Zina (fornication), as the matter will be the same whether they get married or have an illegal relationship.

A: If the woman is from the People of the Book, the illegitimate children born from this relationship are not acknowledged as legal progeny. It is not permissible for a Muslim to marry her unless it is proven that she has repented because she, in this case, is not a chaste. If she repents, it is permissible for him to marry her.

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Q 7: Everyone in this country must pay insurance which is sometimes quite costly. Some Muslims, may Allah guide them, lie and cheat to pay lesser sums. It may be worth mentioning that it is usually difficult for insurance companies to discover such fraud. What is the ruling on this?

A: Insurance is not permissible for it is a form of gambling. However, if a person is compelled to pay insurance ; it is permissible for them to do so provided that they do not receive anything more than what they paid. Again, this is only permissible under necessity for Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾while He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity﴿ However, a transaction that is made through lying is not permissible. Transactions must not be based on lying and deception. On the contrary, a Muslim has to avoid such traits. If a Muslim tells the truth and is consequently obliged to pay insurance money, doing so is permissible as this is a case of necessity. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾while He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity﴿ This applies to insurance and other dealings.

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Q 8: Some Muslims manage to use public telephones in a way that enables them to make free calls. Is this considered theft?

A: Doing this is not permissible as it involves swindling and fraud. It is considered taking others' money unjustly. May Allah protect us all!

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Q 9: Is it permissible for a woman to offer an 'Aqiqah (a sacrifice slaughtered on the seventh day of a child's birth) for her illegitimate child, and does the child have the right to maintenance?

A: Of course, she is permitted to offer an `Aqiaqah for her illegitimate child. She should spend on him if she is able to afford supporting him, otherwise, she should take the child to the proper government authorities. If she has the means to spend on the child, she should do so, bring him up, and offer `Aqiqah for him as the upbringing of the child is obligatory on her. Moreover, she is required to repent to Allah for what she did and the one whom she fornicated with must also repent to Allah. However, the child will be ascribed to her not to the male and the latter is not required to support this child. He is to repent to Allah while the child is to be ascribed to his mother who is responsible for his expenses.

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Q 10: Is it permissible to offer Salah (Prayer) in a Masjid (mosque) built on land that was bought by Riba (usury/interest) money? Also, is it permissible to offer Salah in a Masjid wher some of the money given for it's construction was Haram (prohibited) such as from the sale of Khamr (intoxicants)?

A: Offering Salah in such Masjids (mosques) is permissible. Nevertheless, it is not permissible to use

Haram money, i.e. of Riba, Zina (premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery), etc. for establishing or supporting Masjids. Halal (lawful) money has to be chosen to be pay for such projects.

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Q 11: We live in a western country where there is frequent heavy rainfall. Is it prescribed for us to read the Du`a' Ma'thur (supplication based on transmitted reports): "O Allah! Let it be a strong delightful rain." or: (O Allah! Let it be a strong fruitful rain.) **or: "O Allah! Let rain fall on the plateaus, mountains, hills, and valleys..."?**

A: Yes, you should recite is ordained that you say: (O Allah! Let it be a strong fruitful rain.) Also, if you fear being harmed by it you are to recite: (O Allah! Let the rain fall around us and not upon us. O Allah! Let it fall on the plateaus, mountains, hills...) But if rain is not harmful, all praise be to Allah Alone, you are to recite: (O Allah! Let it be a strong fruitful rain. We have had a rainfall due to the Favor and Mercy of Allah. O Allah! Let it (rain) be blessed.) Finally, if you experience any hardship due to the rain; you are to recite: (O Allah! Let the rain fall around us and not upon us...)

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Q 12: Some spouses who live in Denmark and some other western countries

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annul their contracts of their marriage at the Civil Office claiming irreconcilable differences with each other, though in truth they are no problems in the marriage. They only do so to get a social support of a higher value, albeit they are not in need of such increase. Is this permissible? Also, does doing so not affect their marriages or it is considered a real divorce?

A: This is not permissible as it involves injustice and lying. It is not permissible to lie to gain money unjustly. Doing so is Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). On the other hand, if the husband claims that he divorced his wife, this is counted as one or two divorces; according to what he states. In any case, it is not permissible to deceive the authorities to get money through a false claim. May Allah protect us!

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Q 13: I regularly perform the five obligatory Salahs (Prayers). However, although I employ every means to wake up for Fajr (dawn) Prayer, I cannot do so. I thus pray Fajr after sunrise; is this Kufr (disbelief)?

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A: You must do your best to pray Fajr on time. Thus, you will not be considered sinful if sleep overtakes you. However, it is not permissible to intentionally to delay the performance of Fajr Salah until sunrise. Some scholars are of the view that whoever does so is Kafir (disbeliever). They quote some Hadith in support of their opinion such as: ﴾That which differentiates us 'Muslims' from Kafirs 'disbelievers' and hypocrites is our performance of Salah. Whoever abandons it, becomes a Kafir.﴿ And: ﴾What makes a Muslim a Kafir and a Mushrik 'one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship' is abandoning Salah.﴿ (Both the two Hadiths are related by Muslim). According to another wording: ﴾That which differentiates us from the Kafirs and hypocrites is our performance of Salah. Whoever abandons it, becomes a Kafir.﴿ However, the majority of scholars state that delaying the performance of Fajr Salah until sunrise is a major sin but not Kufr. In any case, you have to avoid doing so. May Allah protect us all!

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Q 14: Islamic centers in the city of London in Britain differ regarding determining the time of Imsak (time of day that marks the beginning of the Fast) during Ramadan. Some of the Islamic centers state that Imsak is one hour and a half before sunrise while others declare that it is two hours before sunrise and so on. Could you please tell us what we have to do? It is worth mentioning that Muslims in London and some other British cities can not distinguish the white thread (light of dawn) from the black thread (darkness of night) due to heavy clouds.

A: They have to act upon what they think is most probably the right time for Imsak; each city according to its location. Whenever the sky is not clouding over, they have to determine the time of Imsak by sighting dawn then they are to apply the same for the other days bearing in mind that times of dawn differ with regard to different cities. However, if they can not sight dawn; they are to start Imsak two hours before sunrise to be on the safe side for the Prophet (peace be upon him)

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said: (Leave what causes you doubt and turn to what does not cause you doubt.) The foregoing applies to the city of London and all other cities. Therefore, you have to (Leave what causes you doubt and turn to what does not cause you doubt.) All praise be to Allah Alone, if there is a way to make distinction between sunrise and the break of Dawn then they start Imsak in case of clouding.

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Q 15: Some people in western countries say that it is permissible for Muslims to deal with Riba (usury/interest) with Kafirs (disbelievers) on the pretext of being in a non-Muslim country. Others say that it is permissible to take non-Muslims' money even by stealing or cheating. What is the ruling on this? May Allah benefit you!

A: It is not permissible to deal with Riba (usury/interest) whether with Kafirs or Muslims. Besides, it is not permissible to take non-Muslims' money by fraud. Muslims may only take non-Muslims money and women in cases of war and Jihad (fighting/striving in the Cause of Allah). Conversely, when Muslims and non-Muslims live in peace together; it is not permissible for Muslims to take anything by betrayal from non-Muslims. Again, only when Muslims and non-Muslims are separated

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and a war flares up between them, it is permissible for Muslims to act against them and take their money, women, and children (as captives of war). Muslims referred to in the question are thus not permitted to cheat non-Muslims and take their money unjustly.

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Q 16: Is it permissible for non-Muslim women to enter the Masjid (mosque) though we do not know whether she is menstruating or not? Is it permissible for them to enter the Masjid despite their being non-Muslims?

A: If a non-Muslim woman needs to do so, e.g., to listen to a beneficial speech, to drink water, or to find someone, she may enter the Masjid provided that this will not entail any harm. In such a case, the concerned non-Muslim woman is not to be asked whether she is menstruating or not.

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Q 17: Is it better to move bodies of Muslims from non-Muslim countries to be buried in Muslim lands? It is worth mentioning that there are cemeteries in non-Muslim countries allocated for Muslims.

A: It is better that they are buried in the cemeteries which are allocated for Muslims to avoid expensive costs. However, it is also permissible that they are moved to be buried in Muslim countries. Either way, early Muslims

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died in various countries and were buried in Muslims' cemeteries in the same countries. They were not moved to be buried in Madinah or any other Muslim land.

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Q 18: Is it obligatory on a woman who works and is paid a salary to pay Zakah (obligatory charity)? If so, is it permissible for her to give her Zakah money to her mother and sisters? Is it obligatory on her to tell her husband about any Zakah or Sadaqah (voluntary charity) that she gives or is she to conceal it so that only Allah knows about it? Provide us with your beneficial answer please.

A: Zakah money is not to be given to a person's mother, father, or children. Regarding sisters, the woman in question is to give them from Zakah money if they are financially independent but Faqir (poor). However, if such sisters live with the concerned woman in one home and the latter provides for them; it is not permissible for her to give them from her Zakah money. On the other hand, it is not obligatory on a Muslim woman to tell her husband about what she gives of her money in Zakah or Sadaqah especially if she knows that doing so may harm her.

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Q 19: Is it allowable to give a newly embracer of Islam from Zakah (obligatory charity) if they had Riba-based debts while they were non-Muslims?

A: It is allowable to settle their debts from Zakah for they are poor Muslims, poor and in debt and consequently it is permissible to give them what helps them repay their debts.

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Q 20: Cremation is adopted in this country under the law. The Muslim doctor who observes the patient's death is required to sign the cremation certificate. The question is: Is it permissible for the doctor to sign this certificate? It is worth mentioning that the cremation can not be done except with the doctor's approval.

A: He is not allowed to do so because it entails helping one another in sin and transgression. If the dead is a Muslim, it is not permissible for the doctor to approve burning the dead body. If he is Kafir (non-Muslim), the issue is to be considered. To be on the safe side, the doctor should not approve burning the dead body as it is impermissible. The matter is flexible when it comes to burning the Kafir dead body at the times of necessity. As for burning the Muslim dead body, it is not permissible for the doctor to approve this act.

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Q 21: Some Muslim brothers hold the view of the obligatory nature of calling non-Muslims to Islam upon every capable Muslim. They also believe that it is permissible for a Muslim to live with non-Muslims and imitate their way when calling to Islam. They say that the Call to Islam does not need knowledge or Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) based on the saying of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him): ﴿Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence.﴾ **What is the accuracy of this view?**

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Is there any special Fiqh for such a call? Is this call considered Fard `Ayn (Individual obligation) or Fard Kifayah (Collective duty)?

A: It is not permissible to stay among the non-Muslims if a person can not express his religion. If he can express his religion, Tawhid ((belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism)), Salah and acts of good, it is permissible to stay there. It is not permissible to imitate the non-Muslims even for the sake of calling them to Islam. It is not permissible to imitate them but he may call them according to his knowledge. He may say to them: Say: "La ilaha illa Allah" (there is no deity but Allah) and teach them the meaning of "La ilaha illa Allah" according to his knowledge as well as the obligations of religion. If he has much knowledge, ﴿Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single sentence.﴾ he may teach them the Qur'an. When they become Muslims, he may inform them how to say: "La ilaha illa Allah and Muhammad Rasulullah" (No god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). They should believe in the Messenger (peace be upon him), follow him and that person should teach them the knowledge he has. But if there is someone more knowledgeable than he is, he should seek his help in order to call them properly. The more perfect their calling to Allah is, the more useful it will be for them and more rewarding; otherwise, a person should do his best.

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4- `Ibadah means Tawhid and obedience to Allah

All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions, and those who follow his guidance. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in His Noble Book: ﴿O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth.﴾ ﴿He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise).﴾

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) asks His believing Servants in many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) to fear Him as He should be feared, because Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared) is the core of religion; it is the form of `Ibadah (worship) for which the people were created and were asked to perform in Allah's saying (Exalted be He), ﴿And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴾ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious).﴾ It is the form of `Ibadah with which the Messengers

(peace be upon them) were sent. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴾

This `Ibadah is Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah) and obedience to Allah. It also includes Taqwa, Iman (Faith), guidance and righteousness, according to Allah's saying (Glorified be He), ﴿whereas there has surely come to them the Guidance from their Lord!﴾ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿but Al-Birr (is the quality of the one) who fears Allâh.﴾ He also says: ﴿but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allâh, the Last Day﴾

All Mukallafs (people meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions), whether people or Jinn (creatures created from fire), Arabs or non-Arabs, men or women should fear Allah as He should be feared by believing in Tawhid, sincerity to Him and following His Messenger (peace be upon him). This is the `Ibadah they were created for; its basis is testifying that there is no Ilah (god) but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. This is the basis of testifying that there is no Ilah but Allah; it means that there is none worthy of being worshipped but Allah. A Mu'min (believer) should testify that there is none worthy of being worshipped but Allah and that

Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, the Arabian, Hashemite, the Makkan and then the Madany man is the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him); that we should follow him, believe in that with which he was sent and follow his Shari`ah (Islamic law). This is an obligation on everyone. Allah (Exalted be

He) says, ﴿And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴾ He (Glorified be He) says: ﴿And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)﴾

This is the form of `Ibadah they were created for: dedicating `Ibadah to Allah alone, whether Du`a' (supplication), fear, hope, slaughtering animals, seeking help, Salah (Prayer) and other things. They should also testify that Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib is truly the Messenger of Allah to the residents of the two worlds, whether Jinn or men, Arabs or non-Arabs, men or women. All Mukallafs should make such a testimony, that there is none worthy of being worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad ibn `Abdullah is the Messenger of Allah to men and Jinn, and the final Prophet, according to Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴿Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allâh and the last (end) of the Prophets.﴾

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He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allâh﴾ Then, Iman is necessary, in addition to the rest of the pillars of Islam: Salah, Zakah (obligatory charity), Sawm (Fast) and Hajj, according to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴿Islam was based on five pillars: testimony that there is none worthy of being worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; performing Salah; giving Zakah; observing Sawm in Ramadan; and performing Hajj.﴾ Those pillars are obligatory in addition to believing in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Day of Resurrection and the Divine Decree, whether favorable or not. Those are the six tenets of Iman. Then come all the Commands of Allah and His Messenger, and abandoning all the things prohibited by Allah and His Messenger. These are also included in Islam and Iman. All Mukallafs should believe in Allah and His Messenger; believe in the six tenets of Iman; and apply the five pillars of Islam: the two Shahadahs (Testimonies of Faith), Salah, Zakah, Sawm and Hajj, while believing that they are Fard (obligatory)

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on everyone. They should also believe that Allah prohibited Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and all the sins mentioned in the Qur'an and clarified by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), such as Zina (adultery), theft, drinking Khamr (intoxicant), Riba (usury) and other things prohibited by Allah. All Mukallafs should believe in all the things made obligatory by Allah and prohibited by Allah. They should also perform the obligations enjoined by Allah, refrain from the prohibitions made by Allah and observe Allah's Limits. They should hope for Allah's Reward and fear His Punishment. It is prescribed for them to hasten to do good, voluntary deeds, because they compensate for the missing parts in obligatory deeds.

It is prescribed for every Mu'min to hasten to perform good deeds, such as supererogatory Salah, supererogatory Sadaqah (voluntary charity), Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah), Hajj more than once, `Umrah (lesser pilgrimage) more than once and other supererogatory acts prescribed by Allah. If a Mu'min hastens to do this, they become with those closer to Allah in the highest stage. There are three degrees of Muslims:

First, the ones who wrong themselves by committing sins.

Second, moderate people who perform the obligations and leave the prohibited things.

Third, the close ones who hasten to perform good deeds and

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obligations; they hasten to obey Allah and perform supererogatory acts hoping for Allah's Reward and fearing His Punishment.

I advise my sons, the students, and everyone to fear Allah as He should be feared everywhere, in all cases and at anytime. They should hold fast to Allah's Religion; beware of things prohibited by Allah; and observe the Limits of Allah, hoping for Allah's Reward and fearing His Punishment, according to Allah's (Glorified be He) Saying: ﴾Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allâh (Alone)," and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!﴿ ﴾"We have been your friends in the life of this world and are (so) in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have (all) that your inner-selves desire, and therein you shall have (all) for which you ask.﴿ ﴾"An entertainment from (Allâh), the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."﴿ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is (only) Allâh," and thereafter stand firm and straight on the Islâmic Faith of Monotheism, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.﴿ Those are ﴾the dwellers of Paradise, abiding therein (forever) — a reward for what they used to do.﴿ He (Glorified be He) told His Prophet

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(peace be upon him): ﴾So stand (ask Allâh to make) you (Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) firm and straight (on the religion of Islâmic Monotheism) as you are commanded and those (your companions) who turn in repentance (unto Allâh) with you﴿

All Mukallafs should follow Istiqamah (integrity) on Al-Haqq (the Truth), whether performing obligations or leaving prohibitions, during their lifetime. Everyone should fear Allah as He should be feared; perform obligations and leave prohibitions out of Iman in Allah and His Messenger, hoping for reward and sincerity, while hoping for Allah's Reward and fearing His Punishment. That is why Allah (Glorified be He) says to His Prophet: ﴾And worship your Lord until there comes unto you the certainty (i.e. death).﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾O you who believe! Fear Allâh (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islâm [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allâh)].﴿

Everyone should fear Allah; hold fast to His Religion; keep away from prohibitions; love people or hate them for Allah (according to norms prescribed by Allah); and befriend people or create enmity with them for the Sake of Allah. That is why they were created and that is what they were asked, which is `Ibadah that they were created for according to Allah's (Glorified be He) Saying: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿

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It is the same `Ibadah people were created for as mentioned in Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴾O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh)﴿

We should strive in this and ask Allah to grant us success and help. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allâh's religion - Islâmic Monotheism). And verily, Allâh is with the Muhsinûn (good doers)."﴿ He (Glorified be He) says: ﴾And whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).﴿ ﴾And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine.﴿ He also says: ﴾and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.﴿ He also says: ﴾and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will expiate from him

his sins, and will enlarge his reward.》 He further says: 《O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth.》 《He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins.》

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If a person fears Allah, saves their tongue and keeps Istiqamah, Allah will set right their deeds and forgive their sins. If a person obeys Allah and His Messenger, they will win greatly. This is Taqwa, to obey Allah and His Messenger; this is Allah's Religion and this is Iman (belief) in Allah and His Messenger, 《And whosoever obeys Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise).》

May Allah guide us all to do good, useful deeds! May Allah grant you and us good comprehension of religion! May Allah protect you and us from the evils of ourselves and our misdeeds!

I repeat my advice again; apply what we have mentioned; perform Da`wah (calling to Islam); hope for Allah's Reward and fear His Punishment according to His (Glorified be He) Saying: 《And who is better in speech than he who [says: "My Lord is Allâh (believes in His Oneness)," and then stands firm (acts upon His Order), and] invites (men) to Allâh's (Islâmic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds, and says: "I am one of the Muslims."》 He (Glorified be He) also says: 《Invite (mankind, O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islâm) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'ân) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better.》

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This is what our Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He) ordered us to do. He (Exalted be He) also says: 《Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم): "This is my way; I invite unto Allâh (i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allâh i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism with sure knowledge). And Glorified and Exalted be Allâh (above all that they associate as partners with Him). And I am not of the Mushrikûn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh; those who worship others along with Allâh or set up rivals or partners to Allâh)."》

May Allah make you and us follow the Messenger of Allah with deep insight; and protect you and us from the evils within ourselves and our misdeeds! He is the Only One Capable of doing so. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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Questions

Q 1: Some people ascribe the following saying of Salaf (righteous predecessor): "We do not declare a Muslim as a disbeliever for committing a sin unless he believes it is lawful." to Al-Murji'ah (a deviant Islamic sect claiming that Faith is restricted to belief not deeds), is this right?

A: This is wrong for this is the saying of Ahl-ul-Sunnah (those adhering to the Sunnah). The adherents to Sunnah see that the person who commits a sin is not to be deemed as non-Muslim as long as he does not consider sins as lawful. For example, the adulterer and drunkard should not be deemed as non-Muslim unless they consider their evil deeds are allowable. On the other hand, Khawarij (separatist group that believes committing a major sin amounts to disbelief) deem a person a non-Muslim by the mere doing of sins. Anyhow, Ahl-ul-Sunnah say that a sinner is disobedient to Allah that should be submitted to

Had (ordained punishment for violating Allah's Law) and, in addition, he should offer repentance to Allah but in no way can he be regarded as a non-Muslim as long as he does not deem sins allowable such as adultery, wine, usury and the like. He is regarded as disobedient to Allah and of weak belief. This is the opinion of Ahl-ul-Sunnah which is at variance with that of Khawarij and Mu`tazilah (a deviant Islamic sect claiming that those who commit major sins are in a state between belief and disbelief). It becomes known that Ahl-Al-Sunnah do not consider a person who commits sins while knowing that they are Haram (prohibited) as non-Muslim but he is regarded as disobedient and of weak belief and should be submitted to Had.

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Q 2: Scholars declaring that the person who abandons all actions of the organs but pronounces the two Shahadahs (Testimony of Faith) and have deep-rooted Iman (faith/believe) in the heart is not a Kafir (disbeliever/non-Muslim), are they Murji'ah (a deviant Islamic sect claiming that Faith is restricted to belief not deeds)?

A: It is Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) who declare that,

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for they view that whoever abandons Sawm (Fast), Zakah (obligatory charity) or Hajj is not Kafir, rather has fallen into a major sin. However, some scholars do charge whoever does this of Kufr (disbelief), but the correct opinion is that they are not to be deemed so. With regards to a person who abandons Salah (Prayer), the preponderant opinion is that anyone who does this will be committing major Kufr if they intend to do so. Abandoning Zakah, Sawm, or Hajj however, is an act of Kufr, yet, it does not take a person out of Islam, but is a grievous major sin. The evidence on this is explicated in the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the one who refrains from paying Zakah: ﴾On the Day of Resurrection, they will be tormented by their wealth﴿ As shown in the Noble Qur'an: ﴾On the Day when that (Al-Kanz: money, gold and silver the Zakât of which has not been paid) will be heated in the Fire of Hell and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, (and it will be said unto them): "This is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard."﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said that they will be tormented by their money, cattle, gold and silver. Afterwards a person will see their path either to Jannah (paradise) or to Nar (Hellfire). Therefore, this shows that those who commit this will be punished. Consequently, they might enter Nar or might just be punished in Al-Barzakh (period between death and the Resurrection) but will subsequently enter Jannah.

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Q 3: Can a person commit Kufr `Amaly (disbelief in actions) which takes them out of Islam in normal cases?

A: The Kufr `Amaly which takes a person out of Islam includes performing Sujud (Prostration) and slaughtering animals for other than Allah. According to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body), the acts which indicate offering a sacrifice to the idols, Jinn or the planets, offering Salah or prostrating oneself before them, cursing the religion or the Messenger, or mocking at Allah or the Messenger fall into major Kufr `Amaly.

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Q 4: What is the ruling on making Sujud (Prostration) and slaughtering for other than Allah out of ignorance? Is doing these acts ignorantly the same as doing them intentionally?

A: These acts fall into the matters the Muslim should not ignore. The doer of these acts is deemed a Kafir (disbeliever) and must perform Tawbah (repentance to Allah). Allah accepts a person whose Tawbah is sincere. On the day of the Liberation of Makkah, some Mushriks (persons who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) who were known for strong disbelief and misguidance performed Tawbah and Allah accepted it. As for the report that Mu`adh ibn Jabal prostrated himself before the Prophet (peace be upon him),

it was allegorically interpreted and is regarded as acceptable. The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained to Mu`adh that his act is Haram (prohibited) and that the person should make Sujud only for Allah. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So fall you down in prostration to Allâh and worship Him (Alone).﴿ Mu`adh was ignorant of the ruling and the Prophet (peace be upon him) made it clear for him and all Muslims that Sujud is an exclusive right of Allah. He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So fall you down in prostration to Allâh and worship Him (Alone).﴿ And: ﴾Say (O Muhammad peace be upon him): "Verily, my Salât (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists). "He has no partner."﴿ Thus, whoever makes Sujud for anyone or anything other than Allah is a Kafir and required to perform Tawbah.

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Q 5: Is the alteration of laws considered part of disbelief that drives someone out of the fold of Islam?

A: When a person deems the converted-to-laws lawful and resorts to a law against Shari`ah (law), he will be committing major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam). If a person does this for a reason, he will be disobedient to Allah, but doing it for the sake of taking a bribe or to please so and so, while he knows that this action is prohibited, it will be committing a minor Kufr. If he does it, deeming it lawful, he will be committing Major Kufr as Ibn `Abbas said: ﴿And whosoever does not judge by what Allâh has revealed, such are the Kâfirûn (i.e. disbelievers of a lesser degree as they do not act on Allâh's Laws).﴾

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﴿And whosoever does not judge by that which Allâh has revealed, such are the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers - of a lesser degree).﴾ ﴿And whosoever does not judge by what Allâh has revealed (then) such (people) are the Fâsiqûn [the rebellious i.e. disobedient (of a lesser degree) to Allâh].﴾ He said: He is not like those who disbelieved in Allah expressly but it is minor Kufr (disbelief that is not tantamount to taking the Muslim out of Islam).

If he deems the law or the verdict lawful, he will be a disbeliever but if he does it for a bribe or because there is enmity between him and the sentenced person or to satisfy some people or any other reason, he will be committing minor disbelief.

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Q 6: Is there a difference between neglecting the Islamic Shari`ah in judgment in general and in one case?

A: If a person does so without deeming it lawful but ruled with a law other than the Shari`ah (Islamic Law) due to other causes, they commit minor disbelief. On the other hand, if they state that there is no harm in ruling according to a law other than the Shari`ah or that the Shari`ah is better in judgment but

there is no harm in ruling according to something other than it, they commit major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam) even if they admit that the Shari`ah is better in ruling or the same degree. Of course, this applies to those who deem ruling according to something other than the Shari`ah as better. May Allah protect us against that! However, all of this should be avoided for it is not allowable for anyone to rule according to a law other than what Allah revealed even if there is some enmity or the like between the him and the sentenced. Also, those in authority should avoid this and rule in accordance with Allah's Shar` (Law).

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Q 7: Do the actions done by limbs achieve perfect Iman (faith) or valid Iman?

A: The actions done by the limbs include acts which help achieve perfect Iman and acts which nullify Iman if a person omits them. The correct view is that Sawm (fasting) and Sadaqah (voluntary charity) achieve perfect Iman. Yet, the Iman is decreased and becomes weak if Sadaqah is omitted. As for Salah (Prayers), the most correct view is that the person who abandons it commits major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam). We implore Allah to grant us safety. Similarly, committing good deeds helps achieve perfect Iman.

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The frequent offering of supererogatory Salah, Sawm and Sadaqah increases Iman.

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Q 8: What is your last advice in this meeting?

A: My last recommendation is to have deep understanding of the religion, reflect on the Qur'an, frequent reciting of the Qur'an, pondering over its meaning and studying it. You should follow the Qur'an and Sunnah and read the books of Ahl Al-Sunnah (those adhering to the Sunnah) such as the books of Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, Ibn Al-Qayyim which contain a great deal of goodness as well as the books of Salaf (righteous predecessors) such as Tafsir (explanation/exegesis of the meanings of the Qur'an) of Ibn Jarir, Kitab-ul-Tawhid (the Book of Tawhid) by Ibn Khuzaymah, Sharh-ul-Sunnah by Al-Baghawy, Sharh-ul-Tahawiyyah by Ibn Abu Al-`Iz, Al-Hamawiyyah and Al-Tadmuriyyah which are of great importance and are very useful books.

We ask Allah to guide all Muslims to success, guidance and good intention and actions!

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5- True Iman and the characteristics of the believers

In the Name of Allah the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious! Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon His servant and Messenger, the best of His creation who was entrusted with His Revelation, our Prophet and Imam, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, his Family, his Companions, and those who follow in his footsteps until the Day of Resurrection! Dear brothers, the title of the lecture is: True Iman (faith) and the characteristics of the believers; it consists of two parts. Firstly, the meaning of true Iman; and secondly, the characteristics of the believers. I will discuss both, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills).

Firstly: the meaning of True Iman

True Iman is to believe in all that which Allah and His Messenger have informed us of with regard to deeds, sayings, and beliefs. It is also to believe in all the legislations which Allah ordained upon His servants from acts, words, and beliefs.

There are many Ayahs (Qur'anic Verses) that stress this meaning, such as Allah's saying: ﴾Alif-Lâm-Mîm. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'ân and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings.]﴿ ﴾This is the Book (the Qur'ân), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are Al-Muttaqûn [the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism who fear Allâh much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allâh much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)].﴿ ﴾Who believe in the Ghaib and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and spend out of what We have provided for them [i.e. give Zakât , spend on themselves, their parents, their children, their wives, etc., and also give charity to the poor and also in Allâh's Cause - Jihâd].﴿ ﴾And who believe in (the Qur'ân and the Sunnah) which has been sent down (revealed) to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) and in that which was sent down before you [the Taurât (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.] and they believe with certainty in the Hereafter. (Resurrection, recompense of their good and bad deeds, Paradise and Hell).﴿ ﴾They are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful.﴿ And: ﴾It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allâh, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allâh, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to Al-Masâkîn (the poor), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, performs As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and gives the Zakât, and who fulfil their covenant when they make it, and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting (during the battles). Such are the people of the truth and they are Al-Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2).﴿ In these Noble Ayahs, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) describes the characteristics of the believers. He (Exalted be He) says that a true believer is anyone who believes in Allah, His angels, and the Last Day. In the first Ayahs from Surah Al-Baqarah, He (Exalted be He) explains that

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the pious are those who believe in Allah, the Last Day, what has been revealed to Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the prophets (peace be upon them) before him. They are those who offer Salah (Prayer), give Zakah (obligatory charity), and believe in Ghayb (the Unseen). True Iman is a matter of beliefs held in the heart agreeing with words spoken by the tongue to which one's whole being submit. Allah says: ﴾They are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful.﴿

These people adhere steadfastly to guidance and they are granted success because of their true beliefs, good deeds, and their sayings which are in conformity with the beliefs held by their hearts and embodied by their actions. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allâh, etc.) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allâh﴿ but Al-Birr is ﴾is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allâh, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it,﴿ Iman is that which resides firmly in the heart and which is proved by deeds. Allah says:

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﴾and gives his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to Al-Masâkîn (the poor), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, performs As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and gives the Zakât, and who fulfil their covenant when they make it﴿ They fulfill their promises and their saying, deeds, and beliefs confirm that they are believers. ﴾and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease)﴿ Patience is an act of the heart; when it shows patience, the other bodily organs and speech are affected. ﴾and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease)﴿ And: ﴾and at the time of fighting (during the battles).﴿ Those are the believers who are patient in times of extreme poverty and calamites, hardships and ease, and when encountering the enemies.

This is proof on having sound Iman unlike that of the hypocrites who say what is not in their hearts. This is the reason Allah says in the end of the Ayah: ﴾Such are the people of the truth and they are Al-Muttaqûn (the pious).﴿ Those who acts according to their beliefs are the truthful, pious, and believers. True Iman is a creed which is certified verbally and by organs. It is to believe in Allah, His Messengers, His Books, His Angels, the Last Day, and predestination, both good and evil.

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This is the essence and the pillars of Iman according to the Hadith which was narrated on the authority of `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) when Jibril (peace be upon him) asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about Iman, the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: ﴾It is to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in predestination, both the good and the evil thereof.﴿ These are the six tenets and principles of Iman. This is followed by believing in the branches of Iman which Allah and His Messenger informed about. To believe in Allah is to believe in Jannah (Paradise), Fire, account, recompense, the stories of the previous messengers and their nations, the Day of Resurrection, in addition to believing in His Messengers, His Angels, and the Last Day.

Moreover, belief in predestination comprises of four things, namely, to believe that Allah knows everything that happens; whether good or evil, the rise and fall of nations, lifespan, provisions, deeds, health, and diseases, etc.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Omniscient. He says: ﴾that you may know that Allâh has power over all things, and that Allâh surrounds all things in (His) Knowledge.﴿ ﴾Verily, Allâh is the All-Knower of everything.﴿

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Second: Allah wrote down everything as He (Glorified be He) says: ﴿Know you not that Allâh knows all that is in the heaven and on the earth? Verily, it is (all) in the Book (Al-Lauh-al-Mahfûz). Verily that is easy for Allâh.﴾ ﴿No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves but it is inscribed in the Book of Decrees (Al-Lauh Al-Mahfûz) before We bring it into existence. Verily, that is easy for Allâh.﴾

Third: Whatever Allah wills is destined to happen and whatever Allah does not will is not destined to happen. This is established by many Ayahs (Verses from the Qur'an), such as Allah's Sayings: ﴿To whomsoever among you who wills to walk straight.﴾ ﴿And you cannot will unless (it be) that Allâh wills - the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).﴾ ﴿If your Lord had so willed, they would not have done it; so leave them alone with their fabrications.﴾

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﴿And had your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed, all of them together. So, will you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) then compel mankind, until they become believers.﴾ ﴿So whosoever will (let him read it), and receive admonition (from it)!﴾ ﴿And they will not receive admonition unless Allâh wills; He (Allâh) is the One, deserving that mankind should be afraid of, and should be dutiful to Him, and should not take any Ilâh (god) along with Him, and He is the One Who forgives (sins).﴾

Fourth: Allah created things and brought them into being with His Will, His Perfect Omnipotence and Perfect Knowledge, as He (may He be Praised and Glorified) says: ﴿Allâh is the Creator of all things, and He is the Wakîl (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian) over all things.﴾ ﴿Is there any creator other than Allâh﴾ These four are the elements of Iman (faith) in Predestination. One should believe that (i) Allah had knowledge of everything including deeds, ages, sustenance, etc. (ii) Allah wrote this down, (iii) Whatever He wills is destined to happen and whatever He does not will is not destined to happen, (v) Allah is Omnipotent over all things,

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the All-Knowing Supreme Creator and there is no creator other than Him.

Iman in all these sixth principles is the basis of faith in what is revealed to Messengers (peace be upon them all) including Shari`ahs (laws) and narrations and on the top of these Messengers is our Imam and leader, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him). The sound true Iman is that which includes these six principles and what is related to them with regard to all that Allah and His Messenger informed of, what comes at the end of time, Day of Judgment, Paradise, Hell and the like, and to believe in all that Allah and His Messenger ordained of acts and words. Certainly, all of this is included in the true and sound Iman.

This necessitates that one adhere to Allah's Command, call oneself to account and struggle against the evils of his inner self to offer what Allah obligated for him and avoid what Allah prohibited by knowledge, guidance and insight. According to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body), Iman increases by forms of obedience and decreases by sins. It is mentioned in the authentic Sunnah of Allah's Messenger what establishes that all that Allah and His Messenger informed of

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and all that Allah has ordained is entitled Iman as mentioned in the Prophet's saying in the Hadith of delegation of `Abdul-Qays which is reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Ibn `Abbas that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾I order you to believe in Allah alone. Do you know what is (meant by) believing in Allah Alone? (That means) to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is His Messenger, offer prayers perfectly, pay Zakah, observe Sawm (fasting) during the month of Ramadan and pay Al-Khumus (one fifth) of your booties.﴿ He entitled these acts as Iman which indicates that Iman refers to deeds as it refers to testification. It was reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Faith (Belief) consists of more than sixty branches (i.e. parts).﴿ and in the wording of Muslim the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Faith is over seventy branches, the most excellent of which is the declaration that there is none worthy of worship (in truth) but Allah, and the humblest of which is the removal of what is injurious from the path. Modesty is a branch of faith.﴿

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) entitled all acts of religion as Iman including the two testifications of faith, namely no one is worthy of worship but Allah and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger, for he said: ﴾The uppermost of all these is the Testimony of Faith: "La ilaha illa Allah" (there is no true God except Allah).﴿ This testification mentioned in the Hadith includes the second one which is that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger for either of them does not stand for the other nor are they separated from each other. They are most required and neither Islam nor Iman will be sound except with both of them. Moreover, Allah made all that he legislated, Iman, which means that Iman refers to acts of the heart, acts of body parts and acts of the tongue with regard to what Allah and His Messenger ordained. Allah entitled removing harm from the road Iman, which is an act of the body, and entitled modesty, Iman, which is an act of the heart.

This showed that what man offers from what Allah legislated and believing in what Allah and His Messenger said is entitled Iman and also all legal acts including Salah (Prayer), Sawm (Fast), Hajj (Pilgrimage), Zakah (obligatory charity), Jihad (fighting/striving in the cause of Allah), enjoining good and forbidding evil is entitled Iman. The same is true for reciting the Qur'an, enjoining good, forbidding evil, Adhkar (invocations), supplications and the like. However, true Iman is that which

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the heart, tongue and body parts confirm to what Allah (Exalted be He) legislated and what Allah and His Messenger told about.

It was entitled true Iman because the heart, tongue and body parts abide by it and believed in it and for it Messengers were sent and Noble Books were revealed and on the top of them is the Qur'an and it is what the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) came up with.

The opposite of this is the invalid Iman, the false Iman, which is declared by the tongue without the heart. It is Iman of hypocrites who say with their tongues what is not in their hearts.

Those who do so are regarded as hypocrites for they held Kufr (disbelief) in their hearts but declare Islam by their tongue as a kind of dissimulation to guarantee their present and worldly needs. Allah (Exalted be He) says in His Noble Book: ﴾(What is the matter with you?) When a single disaster smites you, although you smote (your enemies) with one twice as great, you say: "From where does

this come to us?" Say (to them), "It is from yourselves (because of your evil deeds)." And Allâh has power over all things.﴿ ﴾And what you suffered (of the disaster) on the day (of the battle of Uhud when) the two armies met, was by the leave of Allâh, in order that He might test the believers.﴿ ﴾And that He might test the hypocrites, it was said to them: "Come, fight in the Way of Allâh or (at least) defend yourselves." They said: "Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you." They were that day, nearer to disbelief than to Faith, saying with their mouths what was not in their hearts. And Allâh has full knowledge of what they conceal.﴿

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Also, He (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Those of the bedouins who lagged behind will say to you: "Our possessions and our families occupied us, so ask forgiveness for us." They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts.﴿

This is the situation of hypocrites for they say something and hold another. They belie the Prophet (peace be upon him) and neither believe in Him nor in the Book of Allah and this is clear lying. Allah (Exalted be He) says about them: ﴾And of mankind, there are some (hypocrites) who say: "We believe in Allâh and the Last Day" while in fact they believe not.﴿ ﴾They (think to) deceive Allâh and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive (it) not!﴿ ﴾In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy) and Allâh has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies.﴿ Also, He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allâh, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for As-Salât (the prayer), they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allâh but little.﴿ ﴾(They are) swaying between this and that, belonging neither to these nor to those﴿

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According to the Ayahs mentioned above, those people have no Iman but in place, they have lying, doubtfulness and uncertainty. Allah clarified that they have a false Iman and that they declare Iman in their words but contradict it in their acts and beliefs. Indeed, the true believer is the one who believes in Allah and the Book of Allah revealed to Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) and what this book includes of sayings, deeds and beliefs, then his sayings and acts correspond to what he holds in his heart. This is the true Iman and the truthful Iman with which Allah sent the Messenger and revealed the noble books and based on it happiness and dignity in the worldly life and the Hereafter. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴿ ﴾Allâh has promised the believers - men and women, - Gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of 'Adn (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allâh. That is the supreme success.﴿

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This is the true Iman and Allah promised those who have it mercy, Paradise and dignity. Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾Therefore, believe in Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) and in the Light (this Qur'ân) which We have sent down. And Allâh is All-Aware of what you

do.﴾ There are many Ayahs that establish the necessity of Iman. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾O you who believe! Believe in Allâh, and His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and the Book (the Qur'ân) which He has sent down to His Messenger, and the Scripture which He sent down to those before (him); and whosoever disbelieves in Allâh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away.﴾

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True Iman (Faith) includes belief in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, Predestination, whether good or bad. As shown above, these are the six pillars of Iman. Belief in Allah involves believing in the ordinances of Allah and His Messenger while belief in the Last Day includes believing in the reports of the Hereafter, Paradise and Hellfire and retribution.

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Belief in Predestination entails believing in anything pertaining to Predestination. In addition, belief in Allah involves belief in the events that will occur at the end of time and that occurred in the past. The true believer is the one who is truthful in his words, actions and intentions. Iman can increase and decrease. It increases by acts of obedience such as Salah (Prayers), Sawm (Fast), Jihad (striving in the Cause of Allah), enjoining good and forbidding evil, Sadaqah (voluntary charity), recitation of Qur'an and Adhkar (invocations), calling to Allah etc.; whereas it decreases by sins. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾A committer of Zina (sexual intercourse outside marriage) is not a believer while they are committing Zina, a thief is not a believer while they are stealing, a Khamr (intoxicant) consumer is not a believer while they are consuming Khamr, and a looter who loots while the people are watching is not a believer while they are looting.﴿ (Agreed upon by Al-Bukhari and Muslim) According to a report related by Muslim: ﴾even if they pray, fast, and asserts that they are Muslims.﴿

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Consequently, Iman can decrease by these major sins while its root is intact. The believing sinner remains a believer but his Iman weakens by the means of major sins such as Zina, robbery, consuming Khamr, taking people's money unjustly, etc. These acts oppose the prescribed Iman. The state of perfection of Iman is absent when committing the major sins which Allah has prohibited. This is the reason he (peace be upon him) said: ﴾A committer of Zina is not a believer while they are committing Zina.﴿

It indicates that Iman becomes so incomplete and weak that it cannot prevent a person from committing Zina, robbery, consuming Khamr, taking people's money unjuslty. A believer can fall into what Allah has prohibited in a state of weakness of Iman combined with a strong desire to fulfill lusts which the self cannot resist. Unlike Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream), Khawarij (separatist group that believes committing a major sin amounts to disbelief) deem the doer of these sins a Kafir (disbeliever).

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not deem the committer of Zina, thief, consumer of Khamr as an apostate. This act affirms the view of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah. Hence, if the doer of these sins performs Tawbah (repentance to Allah), Allah accepts it from them. They cannot be sentenced to death, but their crime is punishable by Had (ordained punishment for violating Allah's Law). The committer of Zina must be stoned if they are Muhsan (someone in a state of fortification against illegal sexual intercourse outside marriage by virtue of valid current or previous marriage), if not,

they must receive one hundred lashes and be banished for a year. Had Zina constituted Riddah (apostasy) and disbelief, the committer would have been killed as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾If anyone (a Muslim) changes their religion, kill them.﴿ Likewise, the Muslim thief is punished by cutting off their hands, while they remain Muslim and the Iman root is intact. They should not be killed for this crime, but is punished and deterred from committing such sins. Similarly, consuming Khamr does not negate Iman totally, but it affects its state of perfection. The believing person who consumes Khamr remains Muslim, and therefore the sentence of death is not applicable to them. This sin is punishable by whipping forty or eighty lashes as judged by `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) who is followed by the scholars in this regard.

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The person who takes up the people's money unjustly and the bandit cannot be regarded as apostates who deserve to be killed. They are liable to the punishment stated in Shari`ah. The bandit whose Iman is weak and incomplete should be punished by cutting off their hands and legs, banishment and execution.

It is evident that true Iman entails belief in all what Allah and His Messenger told and ordered us to do regarding words, actions and conviction. According to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah who follow the guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and their followers, Iman increases by acts of obedience and decreases by acts of disobedience. In other words, Iman increases as we show integrity and obedience and it decreases when we disobey Allah and omit the obligations. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾The believers are only those who, when Allâh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Qur'ân) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone);﴿ There are many Ayahs to the same effect. The Prophet's saying: ﴾A committer of Zina,

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is not a believer while they are committing Zina.﴿ stands as a proof that Iman increases by the acts of obedience and decreases by the acts of disobedience and transgressions. According to the opinions of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, and the evidence of Allah's Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger, Iman as sayings, deeds and conviction increases by acts of obedience and decreases by acts of disobedience. In other words, Iman is the matter of words spoken by the tongue, beliefs held in the heart and actions done by the body. True Iman implies words and actions which reflect belief with the heart in Allah and His Messenger and in the obligations ordained by Allah and His Messenger. Opposed to this view, Khawarij and Mu`tazilah (a deviant Islamic sect claiming that those who commit major sins are in a state between belief and disbelief) held that Iman can neither increase nor decrease. The committer of Zina, thief and the other sinners are taken out of Iman and regarded as Kafirs and misguided according to Khawarij and fall into an in-between state according to Mu`tazilah. Both sects agreed that those sinners- like the Kafir- will abide eternally in Hellfire. This is one of the false opinions held by Khawarij and Mu`tazilah. According to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah, the Iman of those sinners is incomplete and weak. They are not taken out of Iman and are not like the Kafir. They, therefore, will not abide in Hellfire eternally

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if they commit these sins out of desire not denying the severity of their mistakes or deeming them as lawful. They are believers and Muslims, even if they will be punished on the Day of Resurrection due to their misdeeds. Only the Kafirs and those who commit major hypocrisy will abide in Hellfire eternally. On the other hand, the Muslim wrongdoers who commit sins out of desire, greed, etc.,

while not deeming them lawful will not abide in Hellfire eternally. According to Allah's Will, those sinners may be pardoned as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Verily, Allâh forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills﴿ The Mushriks (persons who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) will not be pardoned if they die in this state of Shirk. Owing to the good deeds and Islam, the wrongdoers will be left to Allah's Will.

If He wills He will torture them according to their sins including Zina, robbery, etc., from which they did not perform Tawbah. After that, He takes them out of it into Paradise. It was reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that those whose hearts have the least faith, even as the tiniest mustard seed, will be brought out from Hellfire.

Consequently, the sinners will not abide in Hellfire eternally. If Allah wills to torture them according to the sins from which they did not perform Tawbah, they will enter Hellfire. After being purified from these evil deeds, they will be taken out of it and thrown into a river called the river of life, which is one of the rivers of Paradise. In this river, they will grow like a seed in the soil and when they become fully created, Allah, out of His Mercy will allow them to enter Paradise.

Thus, we know true Iman versus false Iman. True Iman implies consistency between the utterance of the tongue, conviction and the actions. It increases and decreases. Although they have true Iman, the sinners

may commit sins which weaken and decrease Iman. Whoever fulfills the obligations and avoids the forbidden things reaches a state of perfection of Iman. The more good deeds the believer does, the higher the rank is obtained.

The reality of true Iman and of the deeds committed by the believers is made clear. The truthful believers who follow the guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him) sincerely in words, actions and belief are the elite of this Ummah.

The Iman of those faithful believers is subject to decrease due to their sins. They hasten to perform sincere Tawbah followed by good deeds to regain complete Iman.

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As for the qualities of Mu'mins (believers), they are many. Allah (Glorified be He) referred to them in general and in detail in His (Glorified and Exalted be He) Saying:

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﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger.﴿ Those are some of the attributes of the Mu'mins in detail.

As for their attributes in saying, they love each other for the Sake of Allah; they advise each other; they support each other; they do not let each other down; they do not abuse each other; they are in harmony with each other; they recommend each other to Al-Haqq (the Truth) and patience; they cooperate in righteousness and piety wherever they are; and they do not cheat or envy each other or express such feelings prohibited by Allah. If you, O Muslim, find yourself doing one of those sins, know that there is deficiency in your Iman (Faith) and weakness in your religion. You have thus missed the perfection of Iman to your current status of weakness in Iman and religion because of the sins you committed.

They also perform Salah (Prayer), pay Zakah (obligatory charity), enjoin Ma`ruf (that which is judged as good, beneficial, or fitting by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and forbid Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). Those are some of the attributes of the people of

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Iman. They also include the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾"A faithful Mu'min to another one is like the bricks of a wall, enforcing each other." While saying so the Prophet (peace be upon him) clasped his hands, by interlacing his fingers.﴿ They cooperate with each other, support each other, and help each other to do good deeds. Their attributes also include the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾None of you will believe until they love for their brother what they love for themselves.﴿ They advise each other, love each other perfectly, wish goodness for their brothers and hate evil for them. Their attributes also include what was mentioned in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith which says: ﴾The similitude of Mu'mins in regard to mutual love, affection and compassion is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever.﴿ All those are the attributes of Mu'mins. Their attributes also include

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Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Saying: ﴾The believers are only those who, when Allâh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Qur'ân) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone);﴿ ﴾Who perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât) and spend out of that We have provided them.﴿ ﴾It is they who are the

believers in truth. For them are grades of dignity with their Lord, and Forgiveness and a generous provision (Paradise).﴿ Their great attributes also include that when Allah is mentioned, their hearts are filled with fear; and when His Book is recited, their Iman increases. They put their trust in Allah in all their affairs while considering the tangible means prescribed by Allah so that Tawakkul (putting one's trust in Allah) is perfect. There is no discrepancy between Tawakkul and considering the means. A Mu'min should combine them both; they depend on Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) while considering the worldly means. At the same time, they should consider the lawful means and keep away from the unlawful ones in seeking lawful sustenance, enjoining Ma`ruf, forbidding Munkar and other things. Mu'mins have true Iman; they are patient; they put their trust in Allah;

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they perform good deeds and keep away from bad ones; they do all that is prescribed by Allah and use all the lawful means. Tawakkul without considering worldly means is considered failure, and considering worldly means without Tawakkul is considered failure as well. True Tawakkul prescribed by Allah to His Servants combines both depending on Allah and considering worldly means prescribed by Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

The attributes of Mu'mins also include what was mentioned in the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the Sahih Hadith related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾A Muslim is the brother of a fellow-Muslim; they should neither hate each other nor give each other up to an enemy. A Muslim who meets the need of a brother, Allah would meet their needs. A Muslim who relieves another Muslim from hardship, Allah would relieve them from one of the hardships on the Day of Resurrection. If a Muslim does not expose another one, Allah would conceal their follies on the Day of Resurrection.﴿

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There are many Hadiths and Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) in this regard, and the ones we mentioned about the attributes of Mu'mins, their good deeds, the true Iman whose people have Allah's Blessing and Promise of Jannah (Paradise), and the false Iman whose people are condemned by Allah and described as hypocrites who are promised the lowest depth (grade) of Hellfire, are enough.

Thus, we have known what true Iman is and the attributes of its people, and false Iman and the attributes of its people who are described as hypocrites, liars, deceivers and cheaters.

We implore Allah to grant us safety from their attributes and morals! May Allah (Glorified be He) guide you and us to what pleases Him! May Allah grant us all Iman and help us be sincere in sayings and deeds! May Allah protect us all from the evils within ourselves and our misdeeds! He is the Only One Capable of doing so. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon His Servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions those who follow them in piety and righteousness!

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6- Declaring the importance of Tawhid

Q: We would like you to send a word of command to people clarifying therein the importance of Da`wah (call to Islam) and explicating things which contradict the meaning of "La Ilaha Illa Allah" (There is no deity but Allah).

Answer: Allah's Great Book (the Qur`an) is all sufficient, as it includes the call to Al-Haqq (the Truth). Allah, the Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He) has called people to worship Him Alone in many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and so did His Messenger (peace be upon him) in Makkah and Al-Madinah for twenty three years during which he kept calling to Allah and clarifying to people their Din (religion of Islam), as Allah (Glorified be He) says: (O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allâh), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious).) And: (And your Ilâh (God) is One Ilâh (God - Allâh), Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.) He (Glorified be He) also says: (And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.) And: (So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only.) (Surely the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allâh only.)

He (Glorified be He) also says: (So, call you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the believers) upon (or invoke) Allâh making (your) worship pure for Him (Alone) (by worshipping none but Him and by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only and not to show off and not to set up rivals with Him in worship), however much the disbelievers (in the Oneness of Allâh) may hate (it).) And: (So know (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) that, Lâ ilâha illallâh (none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh), and ask forgiveness for your sin) Over and above, in many Ayahs, He (Glorified be He) says: (And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)) Besides the Prophet's saying in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith: (The right of Allah over His Servants is to worship Him and not associate anything with Him) Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim. He (peace be upon him) also said: ("Anyone who dies while still invoking a rival (i.e., in worship) to Allah, will enter Nar (Hellfire)") besides his saying (peace be upon him): (Anyone who dies without associating anything with Allah will enter Jannah (paradise), and anyone who dies while associating anything with Him

will enter Nar) Therefore, it is obligatory on all Mukallafin (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) to worship Allah Alone, say La Ilaha Illa Allah and testify that Muhammad is His Messenger. They should devotionally single out Allah with supplication, appeal,

Sawm (Fast), Salah (Prayer) and other acts of `Ibadah (worship) as well as expressing the feelings of fear from and hope in Him. Not to mention circumambulating around the Ka`bah by way of drawing closer to Allah and worshiping Him, Alone (Glorified and Exalted be He). They should beware of worshipping anything else such as the dwellers of the graves, idols, Prophets and so on. For `Ibadah is entitled to none but Allah and it is not permissible for anyone to give it to other than Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). `Ibadah, is a word that comprises all that which Allah likes and is pleased with of sayings, apparent and hidden deeds, Salah, Sawm, Sadaqah (voluntary charity) and Hajj, in addition to fearing Allah and having hope in His Mercy. Vowing and sacrificing are also sorts of `Ibadah. Therefore, a person should appeal and seek support from no one but Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), for He is their Creator, Lord and Deity, He is Al-Haqq. He sent all messengers with that ever since he created,the first one of them was

Nuh (Noah) until the final Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him). All of them called people to single out Allah with `Ibadah as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ And: ﴾And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) but We revealed to him (saying): Lâ ilâha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allâh)], so worship Me (Alone and none else)."﴿ .

The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to tell the people of Makkah : ﴾O people, say: "La Ilaha Illa Allah," to prosper.﴿ This is the duty of all Mukallafin, men and women, Arabs and Non-Arabs, Jinn (creatures created from Fire) and Humans all over the earth. Anew, they must worship Allah Alone and pronounce La Ilaha Illa Allah. They must also single Him out with `Ibadah (Glorified and Exalted be He), and not associate anything with Him in His Divinity, whether an idol, prophet, king, Jinn, tree or the like, as `Ibadah is an exclusive Right of Allah alone: ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ This is the obligation on all Mukallafin among Humans and Jinn, Arabs and Non-Arabs,

Males and females, kings and laymen. All people should dedicate their acts of Du`a' (supplication), appeal, vow, sacrifice, Salah, Sawm and such like, as well as fear (from Torment), hope (in Mercy) to Him Alone, according to His (may He be Exalted and Glorified) Saying: ﴾Worship Allâh and join none with Him (in worship)﴿ ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ ﴾You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).﴿ ﴾And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât) and give Zakât, and that is the right religion.﴿ .

When a person, however, fears danger and takes the means to avoid this, this is not included in `Ibadah. For example; if a person fears burglary, thus, tends to shut their door, hire guards to protect them; there is nothing wrong in this as Allah has said about Mussa (Moses) when he feared Pharaoh: ﴾So he escaped from there, looking about in a state of fear.﴿ Moses was afraid of Fir`awn's evil. This also comprises fearing tangible things such as darkness and likewise. However, taking the means in this regard comes within `Ibadah.

Again, if a person for instance fears thieves and takes the necessary means to ward off that by shutting the doors or hiring guards, or another who fears from highway robbers so resorts to carrying a gun and wending the safe way, this is all acceptable. Likewise, when a person, in fear of hunger or thirst, eats or drinks or does any other action, there is no harm in that as well, for all these are ordinary things that are not embedded in `Ibadah. Allah (Exalted be He) says about Mussa: ﴾The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe﴿ These are normal things that are enabled to all living humans, such as building farms, offering Jihad (striving in the cause of Allah) and other things of no relation to `Ibadah. On the other hand, invoking the dead, trees, idols, Jinn, angels, prophets and appealing to them, this is major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Similarly, invoking the living-beings believing in their super-natural power like what some Sufis do regarding supplicating their shaykhs along with Allah

and believing that they have the power to dispose of this universe, for having a secret nature that empowers them to know the Ghayb (the Unseen) or benefit people with things over which Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) has the Sole Command. These are Shirk-related issues even with living people. We ask Allah to grant us safety from this!

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7- Tawhid is the basis of Din

Q:Your Eminence Shaykh! Could you please clarify the importance of Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism)? It is worth mentioning that nowadays many young people are negligent of it. A: Being knowledgeable of Tawhid is of fundamental importance. It is the basis of Din (religion) that Muslims know the meaning of La ilaha illa Allah; Muhammadun Rasulullah. (there is no deity but Allah, Muhammad is the (final) Messenger of Allah). This is the most important obligation on Muslims. It is the first thing to which all Messengers, including our Prophet (peace be upon him) called their people. All Messengers called their people to understand the meaning of the Shahadah (Testimony of Faith), to give up worshiping idols, and to worship Allah Alone.

This is the first thing to which all Messengers called their people. It is the main obligation of every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions); to believe in Tawhid and worship Allah Alone

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for Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿So know (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) that, Lâ ilâha illallâh (none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh), and ask forgiveness for your sin﴾ And: ﴿And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents.﴾ And: ﴿Worship Allâh and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents﴾ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴿And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴾

Each Mukallaf has to acquire comprehensive understanding of Din, to worship Allah Alone, and to know the meaning of La Ilaha Illa Allah; Muhammadun Rasulullah. In fact, the meaning of La Ilaha Illa Allah is to believe in Tawhid, be sincere to Him (Exalted be He), worship Him Alone, and believe that Allah is the True God which is the basis of Din as Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿That is because Allâh, He is the Truth, and that which they invoke besides Him is Al-Bâtil (falsehood, Satan and all other false deities)﴾ Every Mukallaf also has to believe that Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn Al-Muttalib (peace be upon him) is the true Messenger of Allah,

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that it is obligatory to imitate him and follow his way, and that (good) deeds are only accepted when two conditions are met, i.e., sincerity to Allah (Glorified be He) and following the example of His Prophet (peace be upon him).

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8- Tawhid-ul-Rububiyyah

is denied only by disregarded and deviated people

Q: As the communists and atheists of today deny Allah's Existence, is this not considered a denial of Tawhid-ul-Rububiyyah (Oneness of Allah's Lordship) and thus it contradicts what some scholars mentioned that no Kafir (disbeliever) has ever denied Tawhid-ul-Rububiyyah?

A: Scholars mentioned that Tawhid-ul-Rububiyyah is acknowledged by all nations and only denied by deviated and disregarded people such as the Magi who claimed that there are two gods; a god of light and a god of darkness, that the god of light is greater than the god of darkness, and that the god of light created goodness while the god of darkness created evil. As for denying entirely the existence of Allah (Exalted be He), this was done stubbornly by pharaoh and ancient philosophers.

On the other hand, it is well known that the atheists believe in orbits as gods whose paths are monitoring the universe. However, the majority of Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) believe that there is a Lord

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who creates, sustains, and who is above His Creation. They believe that the practices of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) that they indulge in draw them closer to their Lord.

On the other hand, the Kafirs (disbelievers) of Quraysh denied resurrection though they believed in Allah as their Lord and Creator. However, they associated others with Allah in His Worship and said: ﴾There is nothing but our life of this world! We die and we live!﴿ The Kafirs also denied Jannah (Paradise) and Fire. Allah thus sent His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) to those disbelievers of Quraysh as well as all other Jinn (creatures created from fire) and human beings to guide them to the truth and forbid them to continue in their falsehood. Only those whom Allah wanted to be granted happiness believed in the Prophet while the majority of people did not believe in him as was the case with all other prophets. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.﴿ And: ﴾And indeed Iblîs (Satan) did prove true his thought about them: and they followed him, all except a group of true believers (in the Oneness of Allâh).﴿ There are many other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) to the same effect.

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9- You should neither abstain from the truth because only a few people follow it, nor be seduced by Batil (null and void) because of the abundance of perished people (who follow Batil) Verily, Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared) is an inclusive word comprising all goodness. Its real essence is to perform the obligations of Allah (Exalted be He) and abstain from His Prohibitions out of loyalty to Him, passion and desire to win His Reward and caution of His Punishment. Allah commanded His Servants to fear Him and in return, He promised them to make matters easy for them, relieve their distresses, promote their livelihood, forgive their sins and make them win Paradise. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿O mankind! Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour (of Judgement) is a terrible thing.﴾ And: ﴿Verily, for the Muttaqûn (the pious - See V.2:2) are Gardens of delight (Paradise) with their Lord.﴾

O Muslims! Watch Allah (in everything you do), heed for Taqwa in all cases and hold yourselves to account for all your sayings, deeds and dealings. Hasten to do good deeds and perform the obligations of Allah, make Tawbah (repentance to Allah), acquire comprehensive knowledge of Din (religion), avoid Allah's prohibitions,

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and beware of dedicating yourselves to this world and giving it priority over the hereafter. Indeed, if you do the foregoing you will be granted glory, security, guidance, and happiness both in this world and in the hereafter.

Some of our Salaf (righteous predecessors, may Allah be merciful with them) said: "You should neither abstain from the truth because only few people follow it, nor be seduced by Batil because of the abundance of perished people (who follow Batil)".

I thus recommend that you:

First: Be sincere to Allah in all words and deeds that draw a person closer to Him and keep away from all types of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) whether minor or major. This is the most important obligation.

Second: Study the Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him), hold fast to them both, and ask scholars about religious matters that you do not understand well. You also have to avoid following whims. You have to hold fast to the truth, call people to it, and keep away from all that opposes it to win all good in this world and in the hereafter.

Third: Offer the five obligatory Salahs (Prayers) in congregation. This is one of the most important and greatest obligations next to the Shahadah (Testimony of Faith). It is the second Rukn (integral) of Islam and the first of all the Servants' deeds to be reckoned with on the Day of Resurrection.

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Fourth: Care for giving Zakah (obligatory charity) in the manner it is obligated by Allah for if you do not do so, your money will be considered hoarded money because of which you will be tortured on

the Day or Resurrection. Moreover, it is Wajib (obligatory) on Waliys (guardians) to pay Zakah on the money of their non-Mukallaf (a Mukallaf person is whoever meets the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) relatives such as children and insane people with the passing of each lunar year. This is because of the general proofs of the Qur'an and Sunnah which signify that Zakah is obligatory to be given from Muslims' money whether they are Mukallafs (those meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) or not.

Fifth: Every Mukallaf has to obey all the commands of Allah and His Messenger such as: observing Sawm (Fast) in Ramadan, performing Hajj - if they are able to do so - and all other ordinances of Allah and His Messenger. In addition, Muslims have to glorify the sanctities of Allah (Exalted be He) and ponder over the purpose they are created for and the acts enjoined on them. They are also to hold themselves to account continuously. If they performed the Obligations of Allah, they are to be pleased with that, thank Allah, ask Allah to grant them steadfastness and keep them away from pride, arrogance and self-praise. If they were negligent of Allah's Obligations, they have to hasten to perform true Tawbah, feel remorse, keep firm on obeying Allah (Exalted be He), make a lot of Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah), Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah), and Du`a' (supplication) to Allah (Glorified be He) that Allah accepts their repentance of their past sins and guides them to

righteous words and acts. Whenever a Servant of Allah is given the foregoing great attributes, they achieve happiness and salvation both in this world and the hereafter.

O Servants of Allah! Fear Allah as He should be feared, glorify His Ordinances and Prohibitions, heed to repent to Him from all your sins, count on Him Alone and put your trust in Him. Verily, He is the Creator and Sustainer of all creatures and their forelocks are in His Hand (i.e., He has total mastery over His Creatures). No one has any power to cause harm, interest, death, life, or resurrection.

Give the priority to the right of Allah and the right of His Messenger, may Allah be Merciful with you, over the right and obedience of any other creature. Command one another to do good, forbid one another to do evil, think the best of Allah and devote much time to Dhikr and Istighfar. Help one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression.

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10- The intensity of Islam's strangeness at the end of time

Q: It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) in a long Hadith: ﴾A man would be a Muslim in the morning and unbeliever in the evening or a believer in the evening and unbeliever in the morning, and would sell his faith for worldly gains.﴿ **What is the meaning of Kufr (unbelief) in this Hadith and how will a Muslim forsake his Deen?** A: It was authentically reported that he (peace be upon him) stated: ﴾Hasten to perform good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night.﴿ "hasten to do good deeds (before you are overtaken)" ﴾trials which are as dark as night, where one can be a believer in the morning and a disbeliever at night, or he can be a believer at night and a disbeliever in the morning, who exchanges his religion for the perishable goods of the worldly life.﴿ which means that the foreignness of Islam will intensify until a believer becomes a Muslim (descends from a higher to lower degree in faith) then he becomes a disbeliever. Vice-versa a believer will become a believer in the evening and a disbeliever the next morning selling his Deen for aworldly matter by uttering the words of Kufr or acting according to it for the sake of the world; thus he will become a believer in the morning then someone will ask to him: Would you insult Allah

and the Prophet and we shall give you such and such? Or says: commit adultery and drink wine and we shall give you such and such. So he sells his Deen for a worldly matter and becomes a disbeliever in the morning or th e evening. They may say to him: Do not be with the believers and we shall give you such and such and be with the disbelievers. They tempt him to engage with the unbelievers and be on their side in exchange for money, or become a close friend to the unbelievers and an enemy to the believers. These types of apostasy are common, and mostly occurs because of the love of the world and giving it preference over the Hereafter. Therefore, he said: ﴾Hasten to perrform good deeds before the coming of the grievous trials like the darknesses of night when a man would be a Muslim in the morning and an unbeliever in the evening, or he would be a believer in the evening and an unbeliever in the morning selling his faith for worldly gains.﴿ in another narration: ﴾Hasten to perform good deeds before (these) things take place. Are you waiting for abject poverty, overwhelming wealth, crushing illness, weakening old age, sudden death, Al-Dajjal (the Antichrist) who is a hidden impending evil, or the Hour (Resurrection) which will be more grievous and bitterer.﴿ A believer hastens to do good deeds for fear that sudden death hits him before doing them. A Muslim may be afflicted with sickness that hinders him from work or may be afflicted with old age and other things. So, he should take advantage of his life, health

and mental ability and do righteous deeds before he is hindered by sickness or other difficulties. Sometimes Muslims are kept busy with the world giving it preference over the Hereafter because the

enemy of Islam and advocates of Kufr adorn it for them.

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11- Being well-mannered with Allah (Glorified be He)

All praise be to Allah Alone and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), his family, Companions, and all those who follow his guidance.

It pleases us that our first guest today is His Eminence Sheikh `Abdul- `Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, the Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research, Ifta', Da`wah, and Guidance. Our respected Shaykh will talk to us about being well-mannered with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He); good means that represent such attribute, and signs that manifest a person's being ill-mannered with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

All praise be to Allah Alone and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), his family, Companions, and all those who follow his guidance.

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It is Wajib (obligatory) on all Mukallafs (those meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) to be well-mannered with Allah. This is achieved by worshipping Allah Alone, abandoning worshipping other than Him, believing in Him (Exalted be He) and in all He informed us of in the Noble Qur'an through His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) regarding Allah's Names, Attributes, the Hereafter, Jannah (Paradise), Fire, Reckoning, Reward and Punishment, etc. The highest moral is believing in Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) and being sincere to Allah while the conduct is to commit Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ And: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ And: ﴾And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ The greatest, the most important, and Islamically significant virtue is worshipping Allah Alone and

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abandoning the worship of any other than Him. Worshiping Allah Alone comprises offering Du`a' (supplication) to Him Alone, fearing Him Alone, placing our hopes on Him Alone, trusting Him Alone, offering sacrifice to Him Alone, making vows to Him Alone, seeking help from Him Alone, etc. for Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "Verily, my Salât (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).﴿ ﴾"He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims."﴿

We thus know that the practice of ignorant people offering Du`a' to the deceased, seeking their help, vowing or sacrificing for them are forms of major Shirk. It is worshiping others beside Allah as

referred to in Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴾But if they had joined in worship others with Allâh, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them.﴿ And: ﴾Verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allâh, then Allâh has forbidden Paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode.﴿ And: ﴾And indeed it has been revealed to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), as it was to those (Allâh's Messengers) before you: "If you join others in worship with Allâh, (then) surely (all) your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers."﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾Verily, Allâh forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills﴿

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And: ﴾Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).﴿ And: ﴾"And invoke not besides Allâh, any such that will neither profit you nor harm you, but if (in case) you did so, you shall certainly be one of the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers)."﴿ All Mukallafs are to offer Du`a' and all forms of `Ibadah (worship) to Allah Alone. Being well-mannered with Allah (Exalted be He) is to believe in His Names and Attributes for He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allâh, so call on Him by them﴿ Muslims have to believe in Allah's Names and Attributes as stated in the Qur'an and Sunnah in a way that befits Allah without any Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), Ta`til (denial of Allah's Attributes), Takyif (questioning Allah's Attributes), or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation). They must believe in all Allah's Names and Attributes including Allah's rising over `Arsh (Allah's Throne), descending (to the lower heavens), His laughing, pleasure, wrath, etc. They have to believe that

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Allah (Glorified be He) rises over His `Arsh in a manner befitting His Majesty, unlike the way of His Creatures. They have also to believe that Allah (Glorified be He) becomes pleased, angry, is merciful, gives, abstains from giving, laughs, and speaks in a way that befits Him (Glorified and Exalted be He). Neither Allah's Speech, nor any of His Attributes is like an attribute of His Servants. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴿ And: ﴾So put not forward similitudes for Allâh (as there is nothing similar to Him, nor He resembles anything). Truly! Allâh knows and you know not.﴿

Offering Du`a' to other than Allah, whether amongst the dead, idols, the stars, or Jinn (creatures created from Fire) is a sign of being ill-mannered with Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). All Muslims must trust Allah Alone, remain firm on His Din (religion), worship Him Alone (Glorified and Exalted be He), and believe in His Names and Attributes and all that His Messenger (peace be upon him) brought. They must all follow the Noble Qur'an, hold fast to it, and avoid anything that opposes it. Likewise, they have to follow the Sunnah (whatever id reported from the Prophet)

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and honor it. This is a general obligation upon all Muslims to follow Qur'an and Sunnah, extol them, and avoid all that contradicts them.

I ask Allah (Exalted be He) to guide all Muslims to understand the Qur'an and Sunnah comprehensively, to be firm on His Din, and to avoid all that opposes His Shari`ah (Islamic law). Verily, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is All-Hearing, Ever-Near! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness!

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Ruling on quoting as evidence the Hadith "of the seventy thousand" to abandon the means

Q: Some people cite as evidence the Hadith "of the seventy thousand persons who will enter Jannah (Paradise) without being called to account or punishment. How can we refute them?

A: These seventy thousands do not abandon the means, rather they refrain from two things; Istirqa' and cauterization. Istirqa' is asking a person to make Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and saying supplications over the sick seeking healing) for oneself.

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This Hadith indicates that refraining from asking and not utilizing cauterization is preferable, but there is no harm in resorting to them when there is an urgent need to do so. This is based on the Prophet's command (peace be upon him) to `Aishah to ask for Ruqyah when she became ill. He also commanded the widow of Ja`far ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him); Asma' bint `Umays (may Allah be pleased with her) to seek Ruqyah for his children. Accordingly, this shows that there is no harm if it is needed. Furthermore, he (peace be upon him) said: ⟪There is Healing in three: cauterization, a shallow cut of a cupper, or a potion of honey, and I don't like to be cauterized⟫ But, he (peace be upon him) cauterized some of his Companions when there was a necessity, for it is permissible when the need need exists. Istirqa' is asking for Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and saying supplications over the sick seeking healing), however, if a person offers Ru`yah for another without the latter's request, this is allowable without Karahah (reprehensibility). Similarly, this applies to all other permissible means of treatment such as injections, pills and syrups..etc. As regards the evil portent mentioned in the Hadith of the Seventy, it involves taking evil omens from things that are either seen or heard. This is prohibited, for it is one of the forms of minor Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) when it hinders a person from doing a thing. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ⟪The believers are only those who, when Allâh is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Qur'ân) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone);⟫

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ⟪There is no 'Adwa (contagion, transmission of infectious disease without the permission of Allah), and no Tiyarah (superstitious belief in bird omens)⟫ This is in addition to his (peace be upon him) saying: ⟪Tiyarah is Shirk; Tiyarah is Shirk⟫ Besides, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said when Tiyarah was mentioned in is presence him: ⟪The best of it is optimism and it should not prevent a Muslim from going ahead (i.e., with their plans). If any of you sees something that they dislike, let them say: "Allahumma la ya'ty bil-hasanat illa anta wa la yadfa` al-sayi'at illa anta, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illa bik" (O Allah, no one brings good but You and no one wards off evil but You, and there is neither power nor strength except with You.⟫ It was also reported that he (peace be upon him) said: ⟪Whoever allows Tiyarah to prevent

them from doing something, commits an act of Shirk." They said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is the kafarah (expiation) for this?" He said, "To recite: Allahumma la khayra illa khayruk wa la tayra illa tayruk wa la ilaha ghayruk (O Allah, there is no good except Yours, no auspice except Yours, and there is no god beside You).") Related by Imam Ahmad. Based on the above mentioned evidence, it is known that Tawakkul (putting one's trust in Allah) does not prevent one from relying on (worldly) means. If a person, for example, eats or drinks,

this is considered a means to build and protect their body. Thus, it is not permissible for one to refrain from eating or drinking on the plea of having Tawakkul, expecting this to keep one sound and healthy, for this makes no sense. Correspondingly, a person should wear heavy clothing in winter, to ward off the cold, shut the doors to guard against burglary, carry a weapon when there is a need...etc. All these are means which a person is ordered to employ. It is worth mentioning that the Prophet (peace be upon him), the master of those who place their trust in Allah carried weapons at the Battles of Uhud and Badr. At Uhud, he used two shields, he also wore armor upon entering Makkah. All these were means taken by him (peace be upon him) and his Companions (may Allah be pleased with them).

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13- The final destiny of those who do not receive the Call of Islam

Q: What is the final destiny of those who do not know that Islam is the only true faith which is accepted by Allah and hold other beliefs?

A: If this person lives among Muslims and hears about the Qur'an and Sunnah, yet adopts another faith, he takes

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the same ruling of those who practice that faith which is disbelief. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in the Glorious Qur'an about His Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴾this Qur'ân has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.﴿ And: ﴾This (Qur'an) is a Message for mankind (and a clear proof against them), in order that they may be warned thereby﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ﴾By Him in whose Hand my soul is, every Jew or Christian of this Ummah (nation) who hears about me and dies unbelieving in me will be of the inhabitants of Hellfire.﴿

In the case where this person lives among non-Muslims whom the Message of Islam, the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him) does not reach, he shall take the same ruling of Ahl-ul-Fatrah (those to whom Da`wah has not reached in an uncorrupted manner). They shall be tested on the Day of Recompense; whoever passes the test, shall be admitted to Paradise and those who fail, shall be admitted to Fire. Allah (He may be Glorified) says: ﴾And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning).﴿ May Allah grant us success!

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14- Ruling on a person who says La ilaha illa Allah without acting upon it

Q: Is this a Hadith: "Whoever says: 'La ilaha illa Allah' [there is no deity but Allah] will enter Jannah 'Paradise'."? What does it mean? Also, is it sufficient for one to declare: (La ilaha illa Allah) without acting upon it ?

A: Many Hadiths are narrated from the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the same effect that whoever says la ilaha illah Allah truthfully or sincerely from the bottom of their heart, will enter Jannah. Yet, some other Hadith read: (I have been ordered to fight against the people until they declare that la ilaha illah Allah, so if they say it, then their blood and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf except when violating it, and their affairs rest with Allah.) In some other Hadith the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (I have been commanded to fight against people until they testify that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, perform the Salah 'Prayer',

and pay Zakah 'obligatory charity'. If they do that, their blood and property are guaranteed protection on my behalf except when justified by Islamic law, and their affairs rest with Allah.)

These Hadiths explain each other. The meaning is that whoever says La ilaha illa Allah truthfully from the bottom of their heart and sincerely for Allah Alone and fulfills its rights by performing the Obligations of Allah and abandoning His Prohibitions, then dies in this state will enter Jannah and their blood and property will be protected in this world except when justified by Islam.

All Muslims have thus to fear Allah, worship Him Alone, and believe in His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) as being sent to all Jinn (creatures created from fire) and mankind and as being the final Prophet. All Muslims have to perform the Obligations of Allah, abandon His Prohibitions, help one another in righteousness and piety, enjoin one another to truth and patience, and renounce all Deens (religions) of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Whoever dies in the state mentioned above will enter Jannah without being reckoned or punished.

Conversly, whoever commits sins such as Zina (premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery), drinking Khamr (intoxicant), devouring Riba (usury/interest), undutifulness to parents, etc. and dies in such state i.e. without offering Tawbah (repentance to Allah); they are subject to Allah's Will. Allah may bestow His Favor upon them and forgive them because of their Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism), belief in Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him), and being free from Shirk or He (Exalted be He) may punish them according to the state of sins that they die in. Then they are to be taken out from the Fire after being purified and they will be admitted to Jannah. A proof for this is Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Saying: (Verily, Allâh forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills) This Ayah (Qur'anic verse) thus shows that Allah (Glorified be He) does not forgive whomever dies a Mushrik

(one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). However, the same Ayah indicates that whoever dies in a state of committing sins other than Shirk is subject to Allah's Will. Allah (Glorified be He) may bestow His Favor and Mercy upon them and forgive them without the Shafa`ah (intercession) of anyone or through the Shafa`ah of the prophets, the pious, or any of those that Allah (Exalted be He) permits to intercede. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) addressed the angels: ﴾and they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased.﴿ And:

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﴾And there are many angels in the heavens, whose intercession will avail nothing except after Allâh has given leave for whom He wills and is pleased with.﴿ Moreover, it is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) that he will intercede several times for a large number of the sinners amongst his Ummah (nation based on one creed) after they enter the Fire. Allah will then take them out. Similarly, angels, prophets, and pious people also intercede after being permitted by Allah. Nevertheless, a group of sinners will remain in the Fire for not being encompassed by Shafa`ah; but Allah (Glorified be He) will bestow upon them His Favor and Mercy and bring them out of the Fire. No one will remain in the Fire forever except Kafirs (disbelievers) as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Thus Allâh will show them their deeds as regrets for them. And they will never get out of the Fire.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾They will long to get out of the Fire, but never will they get out therefrom; and theirs will be a lasting torment.﴿ And: ﴾whenever it abates, We shall increase for them the fierceness of the Fire.﴿

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And: ﴾So taste you (the results of your evil actions). No increase shall We give you, except in torment.﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says also regarding Kafirs: ﴾Neither will it have a complete killing effect on them so that they die, nor shall its torment be lightened for them. Thus do We requite every disbeliever!﴿ ﴾Therein they will cry: "Our Lord! Bring us out, we shall do righteous good deeds, not (the evil deeds) that we used to do."﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) will reply: ﴾Did We not give you lives long enough, so that whosoever would receive admonition could receive it? And the warner came to you. So taste you (the evil of your deeds). For the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers) there is no helper.﴿

There are many other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) to the same effect. This is the opinion of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) amongst the Sahabah (Companions) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) those who follow them in piety and righteousness. I ask Allah (Exalted be He) to make us amongst them. May Allah grant us success!

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15- The testimony of "La ilaha illa Allah" (there is no deity but Allah) demands confirmation through words and deeds

Q: Is "La ilaha illa Allah" just a phrase to be declared by the tongue or does it demands actions as well?

A: This is the best phrase that one can ever declare. It is divided into sayings and actions. Sayings are not enough and if this were the case, hypocrites would be Muslims because they repeat it despite the fact that they are disbelievers; but rather they are in the lowest grade of the Fire because they repeat it by tongue without holding it in their heart. It should be uttered with the tongue and confirmed by the heart that there is no one truly worthy of worship except Allah.

We should act according to its due rights by fulfilling Islamic obligations and abandoning the prohibited things because this is one of the prerequisites of "La ilaha illa Allah". The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿I have been ordered to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, so if they say it, then they save their lives and property from me except legally, and then their reckoning (accounts) will be done by Allah.﴾

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In another wording: ﴿I have been ordered to fight against the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is Allah's Messenger, and offer the prayers perfectly and give the obligatory charity, so if they perform all that, then they save their lives and property from me except for Islamic laws, and then their reckoning (accounts) will be done by Allah.﴾ Agreed on its authenticity.

Thus, we must declare the phrase with certainty, knowledge, and actions not just words uttered by the tongue. The Jews and hypocrites say it, but they do not benefit because they do not follow it by action and `Aqidah (creed). So, a person must believe that there is no one to be truly worshipped but Allah and things that the people worship such as idols, trees, stones, graves, prophets, angels or others are falsehood. This is an act of Shirk (associating other in worship with Allah) but Iman (faith) is the sole right of Allah. This is the meaning of "La ilaha illa Allah". It means: no one is truly worthy of worhip but Allah as Allah (May He be Exalted) said: ﴿That is because Allâh, He is the Truth, and that which they invoke besides Him is Al-Bâtil (falsehood, Satan and all other false deities)﴾ --- ﴿And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)﴾ --- ﴿You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).﴾

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--- ﴿And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴾ --- ﴿So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only. Surely the religion (i.e. the worship and the

obedience) is for Allâh only.❳ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ❲He who professea that there is none worthy of worship (in truth) but Allah and makes a denial of everything which the people worship beside Allah, his property and blood became inviolable...❳ In another wording of Imam Muslim: ❲"He who professes that there is none worthy of worship (in truth) but Allah and made a denial of anything which the people worship beside Allah, his property and blood became inviolable..."❳ The Hadith is clear referrence to pure Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) and devotion for Allah.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) sent Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him) to Yemen as a teacher, a guide, amir and a leader, he said to him: ❲You are going to a nation from the people of the Scripture, so let the first thing to which you will invite them be the (Tauhid) monotheism of Allah.❳ in another wording: ❲Call them to testify that there is no god except Allah and I am the Messenger of Allah. When they do this, tell them that Allah has ordained upon them five obligatory Salah (prayers) a day and night. If they obey you, tell them that Allah has ordained upon them charity

to be taken from their rich and given to their poor...❳

Hence; a person must believe in this phrase in words and actions and testify that there is no god but Allah truly out of knowledge, certainty, devotion, truthfulness. It expresses Tawhid, fulfills its due rights, accepts it and frees one from anything that is worshipped other than Allah. Thus, belief in this pharse demands certainty about the meaning of "La Ilaha Illa Allah". Belief must be based on knowledge with no doubt, devotion with no Riya' (showing-off) or hypocrisy and based on love of this creed which indicates Tawhid and devotion; not like hypocrites who say it with their tongue and deny it in their hearts.

A person must accept and adhere to Tawhid, obedience, love which the phrase refers to and free oneself from everything that is worshipped other than Allah as He states: ❲Whoever disbelieves in Tâghût and believes in Allâh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allâh is All-Hearer, All-Knower.❳

Disbelief in Taghut (false gods) means freeing oneself from everything that is worshipped other than Allah; believing its voidance and not worshipping other than Allah. True worship is solely for Allah (may He be Praised) without a partner; neither an angel, a prophet, a tree, a stone nor a dead person in worship.

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16- Establishing evidence by clarifying Al-Haqq

Q: If a Da`i (caller to Islam) wants to establish evidence on some people, must he be a Mujtahid (a scholar qualified to exercise juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings), or is it enough to know Al-Haqq (the Truth) with its evidence, if the issue is related to `Aqidah (creed) such as supplicating to other than Allah or worshipping the dead?

A: In order to establish evidence, it is enough to clarify Al-Haqq supported by evidence for those who have deserted it, even if that person is not a Mujtahid.

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It is sufficient to know the Shar`y (Islamic legal) evidence from the Noble Qur'an and the Sunnah (whatever is related from the Prophet) regarding what they call to. One who is being reminded must accept Al-Haqq and beware not to be arrogant and insisting on falsehood. If thone is in doubt, they should ask the scholars in a good way, with humility and sincere intention. If a person has good intentions and exerts their best effort in seeking Al-Haqq, Allah will facilitate their affairs and grant them success according to His Saying (Glorified and Exalted be He): ﴾And whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).﴿ ﴾And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine.﴿ And: ﴾and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.﴿ And: ﴾O you who believe! If you obey and fear Allâh, He will grant you Furqân [(a criterion to judge between right and wrong), or (Makhraj, i.e. a way for you to get out from every difficulty)], and will expiate for you your sins, and forgive you﴿ Furqan means light, deep insight and useful knowledge. May Allah guide the Muslims to all goodness and appoint over them the best rulers! He is All-Hearing, Ever Near!

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17- Explanation of being excused due to ignorance

Q: Your Eminence Shaykh! You answered a question related to when ignorance can be used as an excuse, and you mentioned that it requires detailed clarification, and that no one can be excused for ignorance in matters related to `Aqidah (creed). If a man was not in the habit of seeking help from the dead or doing such prohibited things, but he did it once as far as I know; he sought the help of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), while not having any idea that it is Haram (prohibited) and is considered Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). He performed Hajj later, and no one told him that what he did was Haram. I do not think he knew the ruling on this until he died. That man used to perform Salah (Prayer) and ask Allah for forgiveness, but he did not know that what he did was Haram. Is such a person who did this act only once, and died without knowing it is Haram, considered a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship)? Please advise, may Allah reward you with the best!

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A: If that man offered Tawbah (repentance to Allah) after this time and asked Allah for forgiveness, this ruling is canceled and he is still considered a Muslim. However, if continued to seek the help of other than Allah and did not perform Tawbah, he is still considered a Mushrik, even if he used to perform Salah and observe Sawm (Fast), unless he performed Tawbah of Shirk.

If a person abuses Allah and His Messenger or abuses the Deen, Jannah (Paradise) or Hellfire, it is of no avail that they perform Salah and observe Sawm, because this invalidates Islam. Thus, their deeds are considered Batil (null and void) until they perform Tawbah. This is an important rule referred to in Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴾But if they had joined in worship others with Allâh, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾And indeed it has been revealed to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), as it was to those (Allâh's Messengers) before you: "If you join others in worship with Allâh, (then) surely (all) your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers."﴿ ﴾Nay! But worship Allâh (Alone and none else), and be among the grateful.﴿ The Prophet's mother died during the time of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance), and he (peace be upon him) asked Allah for permission to seek Allah's Forgiveness for her, but he was not given permission.

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When he (peace be upon him) was asked about his father, he said: ﴾My father and yours will be in Hellfire﴿ because they died during Jahiliyyah.

This means that if one dies in a state of Shirk, it is not permissible to ask Allah to forgive them, supplicate to Allah for them or give Sadaqah (voluntary charity) on their behalf, unless it is known

that they offered Tawbah. This is the rule known to scholars. May Allah grant us success!

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18- Ruling on giving excuse for ignorance in creeds

Q: What is the ruling on giving excuse for ignorance in matters related to `Aqidah (creed)?

A: A person is excused for their ignorance of unclear matters but not for the well-established tenants of belief such as issues related to Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) and Salah (Prayer). If a Muslim lives among Muslim people and does not know that Salah, Zakah (obligatory charity), Sawm (Fast) are obligatory he will not be excused due to ignorance. Likewise,

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a Muslim will not be excused for being ignorant of not knowing that Zina (adultery), homosexuality, and consuming Khamr (intoxicant) are prohibited.

On the other hand, a person is excused for denying some of Allah's Attributes which they did not know. The common person or those who grow up in a remote society away from Muslim countries, like those living in the far ends of America or the far coasts of Africa might not be aware of all the Attributes of Allah, they will be treated like Ahl-ul-Fatrah (those whom Da`wah (call to Islam) has not reached in an uncorrupted manner). In this case, Allah's Attributes should be clarified for them and they are not considered disbelievers until everything is made clear to them. If they insist on their disbelief, they are to be sentenced to capital punishment.

The punishment must be carried out by the Muslim ruler. A person is excused for being ignorant of unclear matters and Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) will call them to account as Ahl-ul-Fatrah (people having no access to Divine Messages). .

It was authentically reported that these people will be tested on the Day of Resurrection. Those who pass the test will enter Jannah (Paradise) but those who fail it by disobeying Allah will enter the Fire. In the life of this world, their case is referred to the Muslim ruler.

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Ta`zir (discretionary punishment) should be inflicted upon them if they insist on their opinions after clarifying the matters to them. If a person lives among Muslims and claims ignorance of matters such as Salah, Zakah, Sawm, Jihad (striving in the Cause of Allah), etc., the ruler should implement Ta`zir upon him for this is a form of blasphemy.

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19- Clarification of major Shirk

Q: I would like Your Eminence to clarify the meaning of major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam), may Allah grant us all refuge from it!

A: Major Shirk as previously mentioned is dedicating any form of `Ibadah (worship) to other than Allah, such as supplicating to the dead, seeking their help, vowing by them, and supplicating to idols, angels or Jinn (creatures created from fire), such as saying, "O inhabitant of this grave! Help me, support me, protect me, or I need your protection."

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It also includes directing speech to idols, Jinn, angels or Prophets after their death. All these practices are considered major Shirk; we implore Allah to grant us safety from it. If a person also considers what Allah has forbidden as Halal (lawful), such as claiming that Zina (adultery), Khamr (intoxicants) and Riba (usury) are Halal (lawful), this is considered major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam). If a person also denies what Allah prescribed as obligatory, such as claiming that Salah (Prayer), Sawm (Fast) in Ramadan, Zakah (obligatory charity) and Hajj are not obligatory on those who can perform them, this is considered major Kufr. We implore Allah to grant us safety! If a person considers what Allah has prohibited as Halal or denies what Allah has commanded of what is Ma`lum minad-din biddarurah (necessarily known Islamic principles), they commit a major act of Kufr and Shirk. The same applies to a person who dedicates `Ibadah or some acts of it to other than Allah, such as Du`a' (supplication); Salah; Tawaf (circumambulation); seeking help; and vowing by idols, the dead, the Jinn, the angels or the planets. All these practices are considered major Shirk. We implore Allah to grant us safety!

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20- The ruling on insulting Islam

Q: If a Muslim woman insults her husband or his religion, is she considered divorced according to Shari`ah (Islamic law) as claimed by many people? Please advise, may Allah bless you!

A: If a woman insults her husband, she is not considered divorced, but she should offer Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and ask her husband to forgive her. If he forgives her, there is no harm on her. If he insults her like she insulted him as Qisas (just retaliation), there is no harm in this as well. However, it is better to forgive her, as Allah says: ﴾And to forego (and give her the full Mahr) is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).﴿

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾The more a person is humble, the more Allah exalts them.﴿ As for insulting her husband's beliefs, this is considered major Kufr (disbelief that takes the Muslim out of Islam). She should hasten to perform Tawbah for it. We implore Allah to grant us safety from this!

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21- Ruling on making up for missed acts of worship after an apostate returns to Islam

Q: If a Muslim forsakes Islam for several years, will he be required to make up for the prescribed Prayers and Fast he missed during this period after he returns to Islam?

A: If a Muslim forsakes Islam and after that Allah blesses him to repent, he will not have to make up for what he missed of Salah (Prayer) or Sawm (Fast) during that time. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief), their past will be forgiven.﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Islam wipes out all that has gone before it (previous misdeeds), and penitence also wipes out all that has gone before it.﴿ This is the soundest of opinions of

scholars in accordance with the mentioned Ayah (Qur'anic verse) and Hadith and other Ayahs and Hadiths of similar meaning. Also, the Sahabah (Prophet's Companions), those most aware of Allah's Shari`ah (Law) after the Prophet (peace be upon him), did not order those who returned to Islam during the era of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) and others to make up for what they missed of Salah and Sawm while they were apostates. In addition, imposing on a person to offer again what he neglected of Salah and Sawm turns them away from returning to Islam. The same is true for Zakah (obligatory charity) for it is to be offered by a Muslim and the non-Muslim is not required to pay it; it is like Salah and Sawm.

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22- The ruling on calling major Shirk as minor Shirk

Q: What is the ruling on a person who considers major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam) as minor Shirk (associating other partners with Allah that is not tantamount to taking the Muslim out of Islam) if it is not accompanied with belief and intention, such as supplicating to other than Allah?

A: Major Shirk cannot be considered minor Shirk or vice versa; each of them is something different. Supplicating to the dead, seeking their help, vowing by them, the planets

or idols, and slaughtering animals to them are forms of major Shirk, not minor Shirk. It is the same form of Shirk practiced by Abu Jahl and his comrades. This is major Shirk; we seek refuge with Allah from it. Supplicating to Al-Badawy, `Aly ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him), Al-Husayn ibn `Aly , Al-Hasan ibn `Aly , Fatimah , Al-`Aydarus, Shaykh `Abdul-Qadir Al-Jilany and others, or circumambulating around their graves seeking their Shafa`ah (intercession) and such acts are considered major Shirk and idol-worship, we seek refuge with Allah from this. This is the same form of `Ibadah (worship) practiced by Abu Jahl and his likes of the people of Makkah in the era of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

As for minor Shirk, it includes words such as "By the Prophet", "By the Ka`bah", "If Allah wills and so-and-so wills", "But for Allah and so-and-so". This is minor Shirk. If a person swears by the Prophet, by the Amanah (honesty, trust, and obedience) or by so-and-so with the intention that the Prophet or `Aly are to be honored like Allah, this is considered major Shirk, we seek refuge in Allah.

Being attached to the dead people is a serious problem in most of the countries that should be given due attention for pilgrims and others. The scholars should give due attention to this problem as well, because it is one of the most serious disasters and gravest sins. Shirk is one of the most abominable crimes according to Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Saying:

(Verily! Allâh forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners (in worship) with Him, but He forgives whom He wills sins other than that) He (Glorified be He) also says: (But if they had joined in worship others with Allâh, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them.) He (Exalted be He) also says: (Verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allâh, then Allâh has forbidden Paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers) there are no helpers.) Scholars, knowledge seekers and every Muslim should give due care to this matter, especially if they live in a country where this takes place, such as Egypt, the Levant (the region covering Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine), Iraq and such countries. They should care about this and advise their Muslim brothers who commit these acts, warning them against the dangers of Shirk and explaining to them that it contradicts with the testimony that there is no Ilah (god) but Allah. Allah is the One sought for help!

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23- Details on the word of Kufr

Q: It was reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) or from the Salaf (righteous predecessors) that there are two types of Kufr (disbelief). What are they?

A: There are two kinds of Kufr, one of which is less serious than the other. There is major Kufr such as abandoning Salah (Prayer), and minor Kufr such as wailing over the dead, questioning lineage and swearing by other than Allah. Each has its own particular evidence.

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24- Disassociating oneself from Mushriks and being convinced of their Kufr

Q: I recently heard that a person who is not convinced of the Kufr (disbelief) of Kafirs (disbeliever) or doubts it is considered a Kafir as well. Similarly, a person who doubts the Kufr of those who abandon Salah (Prayer) or mock at one of the limits prescribed by Allah is considered a Kafir. Is this true?

A: legal proofs from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) indicate the obligation on a Mu'min (believer) to be disassociated from Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and be convinced of their Kufr when they know it and discover their misguidance.

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in the Glorious Qur'an: ﴾And (remember) when Ibrâhîm (Abraham) said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship,﴿ ﴾"Except Him (i.e. I worship none but Allâh Alone) Who did create me; and verily He will guide me."﴿ ﴾And he made it [i.e. Lâ ilâha illallâh (none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh Alone)] a Word lasting among his offspring, (True Monotheism), that they may turn back (i.e. to repent to Allâh or receive admonition).﴿

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This means to refer to it in declaring the Kufr of Kafirs, being disassociated from them and believing that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Only One to be worshipped. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Ibrâhîm (Abraham) and those with him, when they said to their people: "Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allâh: we have rejected you, and there has started between us and you hostility and hatred for ever until you believe in Allâh Alone"﴿ This is the religion of Prophet Ibrahim and all the prophets; disassociation from anyone who worships other than Allah and believing in their Kufr and misguidance until they believe in Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

Every Muslim must disassociate themselves from anyone who worships other than Allah and believe in their Kufr and misguidance until they believe in Allah (Glorified be He), as Allah informed about Prophet Ibrahim and all the Prophets. The same applies to Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Saying: ﴾Whoever disbelieves in Tâghût and believes in Allâh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break.﴿

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Disbelieving in Taghut (false gods) means disassociation from worshipping other than Allah and believing in its falsehood. Every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) must worship Allah alone and believe that He is the Only One Who deserves to be worshipped, and that any other thing worshipped by the people, whether idols, trees, stones, Jinn (creatures created from fire), angels or any other thing is falsely worshipped.

Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾That is because Allâh — He is the Truth (the only True God of all that

exists, Who has no partners or rivals with Him), and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him, it is Bâtil (falsehood).) If a Mu'min knows that someone worships other than Allah, they should disassociate themselves from them and believe in their Kufr if the evidence has reached them or they have lived among the Muslims, according to Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: (this Qur'ân has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.)

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He (Exalted be He) also says: (This (Qur'an) is a Message for mankind (and a clear proof against them), in order that they may be warned thereby)

Allah revealed the Qur'an to His Prophet (peace be upon him) and made it a clear message to the people. If a person is informed of what was revealed in the Qur'an and the Sunnah but does not refrain from their Kufr and misguidance, everyone must acknowledge their Kufr.

This is indicated in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith in which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (By Him in whose Hand my soul is, every Jew or Christian of this Ummah (nation) who hears about me and dies unbelieving in me will be of the inhabitants of Hellfire.) Related by Muslim in his Sahih Book of Hadith.

He (peace be upon him) made it clear that every person who is informed of what was revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him) but dies without believing in it will be in the Hellfire because they did not respond to what was revealed to them through the Messenger of Allah.

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This is the meaning of Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: (this Qur'ân has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.) He (Glorified be He) also says: (This (Qur'an) is a Message for mankind (and a clear proof against them), in order that they may be warned thereby)

It was reported in the Sahih Book of Muslim on the authority of Tariq ibn Ashyam (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (A person who professes that there is none worthy of worship but Allah and makes a denial of everything which the people worship beside Allah, their property and blood became inviolable, and all their affairs rest with Allah.) In another wording: (Whoever testifies that there is none worthy of worship except Allah and denies everything which people worship beside Allah, their property and blood become inviolable.) The inviolability of one's blood and money is associated with Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism), declaring La ilaha illa Allah (there is no deity but Allah) and disbelieving in Taghut, because Taghut is anything worshipped other than Allah. This is the meaning of the Noble Ayah (Qur'anic verse) which says: (Whoever disbelieves in Tâghût and believes in Allâh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break.)

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If one knows the falsehood of a Kafir but does not acknowledge their Kufr or doubts it, one is considered a disbeliever in Allah and His Messenger and the ruling on such people is as the Jews and the Christians. They are Kafirs according to the text of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, so all Mukallafs must believe in their Kufr and misguidance. A person who does not believe in their Kufr or doubts it is like them, because they have denied the Saying of Allah and His Messenger and doubted it. The

same applies to one who doubts the Hereafter and whether there is Jannah (Paradise), Hellfire and Resurrection or not. Such a person is Kafir until they believe in the Resurrection, Jannah and Hellfire, and that Allah has prepared Jannah for the pious and Hellfire for Kafirs. We must believe in all this according to the Ijma` (consensus of scholars).

The same applies to a person who doubts that Allah deserves to be worshipped. Such a person is considered Kafir of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), as Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿That is because Allâh, He is the Truth, and that which they invoke besides Him is Al-Bâtil (falsehood, Satan and all other false deities)﴾ And: ﴿And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴾

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and ﴿You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).﴾ He also says: ﴿And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)﴾ There are many Ayahs in this regard.

Similarly, this applies to one who doubts in the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and claims not to know whether Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Such a person takes the same ruling as one who denies the Message; they are considered Kafirs until they truly believe that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

The same applies to doubting in Messengers who were sent by Allah, such as Hud, Nuh, Salih, Musa and `Isa (peace be upon them). Whoever disbelieves in them is considered a Kafir. Also, one who mocks at or abuses Islam is considered a Kafir according to Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴿Say: "Was it at Allâh (عز وجل), and His Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations) and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that you were mocking?" Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed.﴾

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Whoever abuses Islam and the Messenger is like a person who mocks at them or even more hideous.

As for a person who abandons Salah without denying its obligation, there is a difference of opinion the scholars.

Some of them consider such a person a Kafir, which is the more authentic opinion, according to the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ﴿That which differentiates us from them (Kafirs and hypocrites) is our performance of Salah; a person who abandons it becomes a Kafir.﴾ He (peace be upon him) also said: ﴿What makes one a Kafir and a Mushrik is abandoning Salah.﴾

Other scholars held that such a person is not considered a Kafir, but only a sinner and commits minor Kufr and minor Shirk, but not major Kufr. This is the opinion of a group of

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scholars. One who doubts the Kufr of such a person is not considered a Kafir, because this issue is debatable and subject to Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) among scholars. A person who sees according to Shari`ah (Islamic law) based evidence that such a person is Kafir should believe in this; whereas a person who doubts it and thinks that such a person is a minor, not a major, Kafir, they are excused in their Ijtihad and are not considered Kafirs.

As for those who deny that Salah is obligatory, they are considered Kafirs according to Ijma`, and a person who doubts the Kufr of such people is considered a Kafir as well, we seek refuge with Allah

from that. The same applies to a person who denies the obligation of Zakah (obligatory charity) or Sawm (Fast) in Ramadan. Such a person is considered a Kafir because they do not believe Allah, His Messenger and the Ijma` of Muslims.

Whoever doubts the Kufr of such a person is considered a Kafir as well after being presented with evidence, because they have disbelieved in Allah, His Messenger and the Ijma` of the Muslims.

These are grave issues which a knowledge seeker should thoroughly examine so that they have deep insight. Laypeople; also should investigate the matter and not form an opinion until they

ask the scholars and become well-informed, because the issues of Takfir (declaring someone to be a disbeliever) are serious, not trivial.

Knowledge seekers and scholars should clarify the ruling to people with its evidence. If a person finds anything problematic, they should not hasten to adopt an opinion; they should thoroughly investigate the evidence and ask the scholars in order to be well-informed. May Allah grant us success!

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25- The ruling on being associated with Kafirs

Q: What is the association with Kafirs (disbelievers) that is prohibited by Shari`ah (Islamic Law)? A: Loving the Kafirs, helping them in falsehood and considering them friends are major sins and means leading to Kufr (disbelief) in Allah. If a person helps them against the Muslims, this is association which is considered one of the forms of apostasy, according to Allah's (Glorified be He) Saying: ﴾O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as Auliyâ' (friends, protectors, helpers), they are but Auliyâ' of each other. And if any amongst you takes them as Auliyâ', then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allâh guides not those people who are the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers and unjust).﴿

And: ﴾You (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) will not find any people who believe in Allâh and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), even though they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred (people).﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says: ﴾O you who believe! Take not as Auliyâ' (protectors and helpers) those who take your religion as a mockery and fun from among those who received the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before you, and nor from among the disbelievers; and fear Allâh if you indeed are true believers.﴿ May Allah grant us success!

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26- Ruling on visiting non-Muslims with the aim of calling them to Islam

Q: I have non-Muslim neighbors and I would like to call them to Islam. What is the best way to do so? May Allah reward you with the best!

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A: You should call them to Islam through visiting them or inviting them to dinner and presenting Islam to them. This is not considered the love which contradicts with Iman (faith), for the aim of this is calling them to Allah, directing them and advising them. This should be observed as well with evildoers among neighbors and relatives for it is commendable to invite them in order to advise and direct them. This is not considered loyalty to them but Da`wah (call to Allah) and direction.

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27- The ruling on accepting gifts from Mushriks

Q: A Masjid (mosque) is being built and there are Christians living next to it. If the Christians want to donate money for the Masjid, should the Muslims accept their donation?

A: If this donation carries conditions that contradict with Shari`ah (Islamic law), it is not permissible; otherwise, there is no harm in accepting the donation. The Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted many gifts from Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship).

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28- The ruling on Muslims residing in a non-Muslim country

Q: What is your advice for the unemployed Muslim brothers and sisters who live in England and receive financial support from the government? They sometimes get a job but they do not tell the government about it? Is this deed acceptable?

A: All the Muslims living in non-believers' countries should migrate to Islamic countries where the rites of Islam are being performed if possible. If they cannot move to such countries, they should migrate to less evil countries, like some of the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) did when they migrated from Makkah to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) upon to the order of the Prophet (peace be upon him), because Abyssinia at that time was less evil than Makkah before the Conquest of Makkah. If they cannot do this either, they should fear Allah where they are; beware of committing what He has prohibited; and fulfill what Allah commands. There is no harm if they take financial support from the government if it does not lead to abandoning something Wajib (obligatory) or committing something prohibited. However, they may not take this support except in a lawful manner decided by the State; and they should not lie to receive it.

They should fear Allah in all matters and beware of committing what Allah has prohibited. They should also comprehend the Qur'an and the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet), and ask the scholars regarding problematic issues, even by phone or in writing. May Allah set right the affairs of all Muslims; protect their faith; grant them comprehension of it; and save them from the evil of themselves and their enemies! He is the Most Generous!

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Server Error in '/' Application.

Runtime Error

Description: An application error occurred on the server. The current custom error settings for this application prevent the details of the application error from being viewed.

Details: To enable the details of this specific error message to be viewable on the local server machine, please create a <customErrors> tag within a "web.config" configuration file located in the root directory of the current web application. This <customErrors> tag should then have its "mode" attribute set to "RemoteOnly". To enable the details to be viewable on remote machines, please set "mode" to "Off".

```
<!-- Web.Config Configuration File -->

<configuration>
    <system.web>
        <customErrors mode="RemoteOnly"/>
    </system.web>
</configuration>
```

Notes: The current error page you are seeing can be replaced by a custom error page by modifying the "defaultRedirect" attribute of the application's <customErrors> configuration tag to point to a custom error page URL.

```
<!-- Web.Config Configuration File -->

<configuration>
    <system.web>
        <customErrors mode="On" defaultRedirect="mycustompage.htm"/>
    </system.web>
</configuration>
```

29- Denial of the Fatwa on the permissibility of wearing a cross attributed to the respected Sheikh

Dear brother, professor Muhammad ibn Sa`d Al-Shway`ir, As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Praise be to Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) Who made it possible for this nation and those who care for its individuals to give them a helping hand whenever they need help. Allah knows how particularly pleased I am when I find those who concern themselves with my letters and especially in this time when good people are too few save those on whom Allah has mercy.

I sent you, dear professor Muhammad, several letters at various times and you asked in these letters for Al-Buhooth Al-Islamiyyah Magazine and some books. Also, I had some questions which you graciously answered satisfactorily and I

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and my friends were very pleased by this.

I now have an inquiry about a highly debatable matter which caused great disagreement and discord among our friends and brothers. It is that we received a cassette tape that included some questions posed to the respected Sheikh, `Abdul- `Aziz Ibn Baz, may Allah preserve him! One of these questions was raised by an Egyptian brother about the Islamic ruling on wearing a cross. The Shaykh answered him that this is permissible, which caused a tremendous uproar among us, yet I could not believe it due to its obvious eccentricity. I tried to defend the Shaykh but this was not helpful for it was the voice of the Shaykh, may Allah safeguard him! Qady (judge) `Iyad related in the book entitled "Al-Shifa" the Ijma` (consensus of scholars) on the Kufr (disbelief) of the person who wears a cross.

Please clarify the facts of this matter as there is a great number of Muslim youth waiting for your explanation to this due to your closeness to the Shaykh. It would be good if the Shaykh replied to our inquiry himself.

I must inform you that the status of the Shaykh was badly affected after listening to the tape and particularly with some wicked persons who used it to defame the Shaykh and disparage him.

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We hope that you will pursue this which will be a great reward for you, in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), as well as discouragement for people of ill souls. May Allah grant you success and help you in what is good for this community! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

The sender is a brother from Jordan - Irbid

I read this letter to the Shaykh (may Allah be merciful with him) so he said: "Inna Lillahi Wa Inna

Ilayhi Rajiun (We belong to Allah and to Him we are returning), 'La hawla wa-la quwwata illa billah (There is neither might nor power except with Allah), Hasbuna Allah wa Ni`ma Al-Wakil (Allah (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)), then he dictated this answer which then was sent to the questioner.

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother, may Allah guide him to what pleases Him and keep him steadfast upon His Religion!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I read your letter dated 14, Rabi` Al-Awwal, 1417 A.H., directed to Professor Muhammad Ibn Sa`d Al-Shway`ir concerning the cassette tape attributed to me which included a question about the ruling on wearing crosses and that I gave a Fatwa of the permissibility of this.

I would like to inform you that this was not said by me and it is false

and groundless, may Allah punish those who fabricated it with what they deserve. In fact, this is not the first of its kind with regard to me and other scholars as there were many alike such as what was published in Jordan a month ago in Al-Ra'y magazine which included that I maintained that if a woman goes out for work, she is an adulteress. I delivered a speech about twenty years ago entitled, " The ruling on women working alongside men" but they took from my words what corresponded to their evil desires and ommitted other words. It was distributed in Al-Da`wah Al-Islamiyyah Center in Lahore, Pakistan the first edition, Rabi` Al-Thany 1399 A.H. (March 1979) and it is included in my book entitled "Majmu` Fatawa wa Maqalat Mutanawwi`ah" volume 1, pp. 422-432, issued in 1408 A.H. (1987) We published the article once again to refute the false claims of those people and we will send you a copy of it.

I hope that you will provide us with a copy of the cassette tape in question to review it and do what is required. May Allah make us and you among those who cooperate on right, support Allah's Deen and restrain Bida`h (innovation in Islam) and evil desires! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Writers and those in charge of magazines should be keen to publish sound materials and beware of publishing misleading articles

In the Name of Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions. To proceed:

I read a release by Al-Gazirah magazine on 11/1/1419 A.H. by the honorable brother His Excellency Prince `Abdul-`Aziz ibn Fahd ibn FaysalIbn Farhan Al Su`ud in which he disclaimed what many writers said concerning Nazzar, the renowned poet, and revealed their mistake in this and elaborated on this poet and his condition. Certainly, he did well and performed his duty by clarifying the truth and warning against opposing it.

I offer my thanks to him for his good act and his refutation of the callers to falsehood and those who try to spread it. In fact, if the referred to poet is as the Prince, `Abdul-`Aziz, mentioned, this poet is worthy of dispraise as his poems include great corruption, explicit Kufr (disbelief),

and encouragement of callers to falsehood and vices.

Our publications and writers must fear Allah, support truth and call to it and be keen to spread wholesome materials. They must avoid publishing misleading articles and statements that support falsehood and praise its followers, in accordance with Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴾O you who believe! Be you helpers (in the Cause) of Allâh﴿ ﴾O you who believe! If you help (in the cause of) Allâh, He will help you, and make your foothold firm.﴿ ﴾Verily, Allâh will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allâh is All-Strong, All-Mighty.﴿ ﴾Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) enjoin Iqamat-as-Salât [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational Salât (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the Zakât and they enjoin Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islâm has forbidden) [i.e. they make the Qur'ân as the law of their country in all the spheres of life]. And with Allâh rests the end of (all) matters (of creatures).﴿ ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allâh. Verily, Allâh is Severe in punishment.﴿ ﴾By Al-'Asr (the time).﴿ ﴾Verily, man is in loss,﴿ ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿

Also, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: ❨"Whoever, among you, sees something abominable should rectify it with his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue; and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart, and that is the least of Faith."❩ ❨Never a Prophet had been sent before me by Allah towards his nation who had not among his people (his) disciples and companions who followed his ways and obeyed his command. Then there came after them their successors who said whatever they did not practise, and practised whatever they were not commanded to do. He who strove against them with his hand was a believer and beyond that there is no faith even to the extent of a mustard seed.❩

There are many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and Hadiths to the same effect. Muslims should advise one another with these Ayahs and Hadiths, abide by them and keep away from what disagrees with them. It is known that changing evil with the hand is specific to rulers and those responsible such as fathers with their children and family and the manager of Hisbah (regulation of economic, commercial, and public matters) in matters entrusted to him and the like.

We ask Allah to guide all Muslim, their rulers and all writers to goodness and grant them understanding of Islam. We implore Him to make truth victorious by them and defeat falsehood by them for He is the One Able to do this. May peace, mercy and blessings be upon our Prophet and upon his family and companions!

`Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

General Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,

Chairman of the Council of Senior Scholars and Departments of Scholarly Research and Ifta'

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31- A Muslim must Cooperate with his Muslim Brothers in Righteousness and Piety

Q: Is it permissible to cooperate with the Islamic groups active in the field? To what extent is cooperation permissible? Please advise, may Allah reward you with the best! A: It is permissible and even obligatory to cooperate with all Muslims in righteousness and piety as much as possible because Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression.﴿ And: ﴾By Al-'Asr (the time).﴿ ﴾Verily, man is in loss,﴿ ﴾Except those who believe (in Islâmic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth [i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'ruf) which Allâh has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar which Allâh has forbidden], and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allâh's Cause during preaching His religion of Islâmic Monotheism or Jihâd).﴿

It is cooperating in righteousness and piety and enjoining one another to adhere to the truth and showing patience to clarify the rulings of Shari`ah (Law) and warn against Bid'ah (innovations in Islam) and to make clear the sound creed followed by the Salaf (righteous predecessors of the Ummah (nation based on one creed), the Companions of the Prophet

(peace be upon him) and those who followed them in righteousness.

Cooperation and recommendation is to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and to abandon those worthy to be abandoned because Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden); they perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât), and give the Zakât, and obey Allâh and His Messenger. Allâh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allâh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.﴿ And: ﴾Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of Dâwûd (David) and 'Isâ (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). That was because they disobeyed (Allâh and the Messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from Al-Munkar (wrong, evil-doing, sins, polytheism, disbelief) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do.﴿

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, affection, fellow-feeling is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever.﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said:

﴾Islam is based on advising one another. Upon this we said: For whom? He replied: For Allah, His

Book, His Messenger and for the leaders and the general Muslims.》 (Related by Muslim in his book of Sahih (authentic) Hadith). There are many Ayahs and Hadithes to the same effect.

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32- Ruling on working in printing lottery tickets

Q : The inquirer asks: "I work in a company that prints lottery tickets. Is it permissible for me to continue in this work? Please give us a fatwa, may Allah reward you!

A : It is not permissible upon you to continue in this work. Rather, it is obligatory upon you to leave it because Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).﴿ And: ﴾and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.﴿

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33- Ruling on giving Bay`ah (pledge of allegiance) to other than the rulers

Q : Some latter-day sects give Bay`ah (pledge of allegiance) to leaders they choose from among themselves. They claim that it is obligatory to obey them and abide by their commands

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and not to break their Bay`ah (pledge of allegiance). Meanwhile they are subjects under rulers appointed according to Shari`ah (Islamic law) who has the Bay`ah (pledge of allegiance) of the majority of Muslims. Is this permissible, i.e. can one give Bay`ah (pledge of allegiance) to more than one leader? To what extent are these Bay`ahs (pledges of allegiance) correct?

A : This Bay`ah (pledge of allegiance) is null and void. It is not permissible because it leads to dissention, many tribulations, and rebellion against rulers for no lawful reason. It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: ﴾I enjoin you to fear Allah, and to hear and obey even if it be an Abyssinian bondsman, for those of you who live after me will see great disagreement. You must then follow my sunnah and that of the rightly-guided caliphs. Hold to it and stick fast to it. Avoid novelties, for every novelty is an innovation, and every innovation is an error.﴿

It was also authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: ﴾"It is obligatory for a Muslim to listen and obey (the appointed authority) whether they like it or not,

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except when they are ordered to do a sinful thing; in such a case, there is no obligation to listen or to obey."﴿

And: ﴾Submission is obligatory only in what is good (and reasonable).﴿

And: ﴾"One who has a governor appointed over him and he finds that the governor indulges in an act of disobedience to Allah, he should condemn the governor's act, in disobedience to Allah, but should not withdraw himself from his obedience."﴿

There are many Hadiths narrated to this effect. They all prove that it is obligatory to listen and obey rulers in what is lawful and that it is only permissible to rebel against them when they commit absolute Kufr (disbelief) for which the rebellious have proof from Allah.

There is no doubt that giving Bay`ah (pledge of allegiance) for some people results in dissention and rebellion against the general ruler, which renders this unlawful and must be abandoned. Even when seeing the ruler committing absolute Kufr (disbelief), subjects should advise this ruler to desist. It is not permissible to rebel against him if revolution leads to greater harm because evil cannot be removed by

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what is more evil as stated by scholars, may Allah have mercy on them, such as Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah and the noted scholar Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah be merciful with both of them). May Allah grant us success!

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34- The Reality on the `Aqidah (creed) of Kharijites

Q : What do you say to one who beleives that the `Aqidah (creed) of Kharijites followed the `Aqidah (creed) of Salafiyyah (those following the way of the righteous predecessors) and that they, i.e. Kharijites are Salafiyyah (those following the way of the righteous predecessors)?

A : This is a false claim that was nullified by the Prophet (peace be upon him) who stated regarding Kharijites: ﴾A group of rebels will emerge from my Ummah when they are separated. If you compare your prayers with their prayers and your recitation with their recitation, you will look down upon your prayer and recitation, in comparison to theirs. Yet they will go out of Islam as an arrow goes through the body of the prey. Kill them wherever you find them, for whoever kills them shall have reward.﴿ There is another narration reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding Kharijites: ﴾They would kill Muslims and spare the idolaters.﴿

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It is known from their `Aqidah (creed) that they consider disobedient Muslims to be Kafirs (disbelievers) and judge that they will remain in Hellfire forever. This is why they fought against `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) and those who allied with him from among the Prophet's Companions and others. `Aly fought against and killed them on the day of Al-Nahrawan. May Allah be pleased with `Aly and all the Companions! May Allah grant us success!

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35- Ruling on accusing some of the Imams of Ahl Al-Sunnah of committing Bid`ah (innovation in Islam)

Q : What is the ruling on accusing a number of the Imams of Ahl Al-Sunnah of being innovators because they made errors in the `Aqidah (creed), such as Al-Nawawi, Ibn Hajar, and others? A : If a person commits a mistake it should not be accepted, his mistake should be rejected, as Malik (may Allah be merciful with him) said: "There is no one among us whose opinion may be rejected except the occupant of this grave", meaning the Prophet (peace be upon him). Every scholar makes mistakes and gets things right, so what he gets right is to be accepted and what he gets wrong is to be ignored. If he is one of those who follow the `Aqidah of the Salafiyyah (those following the way of the righteous predecessors), but he makes some mistakes, the mistakes are to be rejected, but this does not place him outside the pale of the `Aqidah of the Salafiyyah (those following the way of the righteous predecessors) if he is known to be a follower of the Salaf but made some errors in interpretation of Hadith, or in some words that he spoke.

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The mistakes should not be accepted and he should not be followed in this. This applies to all the Imams. If Al-Shafi`y, Abu Hanifah, Malik, Ahmad, Al-Thawry, Al-Awza`y, or any other scholar made a mistake, what they got right should be accepted and what they got wrong should be ignored. Mistakes are anything that goes against Shar`i (Islamic legal) evidence, which is what Allah and His Messenger said. No one will be blamed for anything except a mistake that goes against the evidence. What we must do is follow the truth. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾What Allâh gave as booty (Fai') to His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) from the people of the townships - it is for Allâh, His Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), the kindred (of Messenger Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), the orphans, Al-Masâkin (the poor), and the wayfarer, in order that it may not become a fortune used by the rich among you. And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it).﴿

Scholars unanimously agreed that any person's opinion may be taken or left except the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). What we must do is follow what he brought and accept it, and not reject anything that he brought, based on the Ayah quoted above and other similar Ayahs, and because Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾(And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.﴿

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36- The Reality about the Sect of Al-Asha`irah

Q : Do the Al-Asha`irah belong to Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community) or not? Can we judge them to be Muslims or disbelievers?

A : Al-Asha`irah (a Muslim group that bases its creedal issues on logic) belongs to Ahl Al-Sunnah (those adhering to the Sunnah) in most of their affairs, except their allegorically interpreting the Divine Attributes. Yet they are not disbelievers, rather among them are Imams, scholars and outstanding figures. Their fault is that they allegorically interpreted some of the Divine Attributes. They contradicted Ahl Al-Sunnah (those adhering to the Sunnah) on issues, including Ta'wil (allegorical interpretation) of most of the Attributes of Allah, which is wrong. The viewpoint adopted by Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community) is that we must accept the Ayahs (Qur`anic verses) and Hadiths that speak of the Attributes of Allah as they are without Ta'wil (allegorical interpretation), Ta`til (denial of Allah's Attributes), Tahrif (distortion of the meaning), or Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His creation). Rather, they are to be accepted as they are revealed, along with believing that they are true and real Attributes of Allah in a manner that befits Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) and that they differ from those of His Creatures. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴿ And: ﴾"And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him."﴿

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Elaborating on Shi`ah (Shi'ites) Sects

Q : We are in urgent need of information about the differences between the Ahl-ul-Sunnah (adherents to the Sunnah) and Shi`ah (Shi'ites). We hope that you can explain something about their beliefs? May Allah enlighten us all!

A : Shi`ah (Shi'ites) have many sects. It is not easy to mention them in detail in a short time. In brief, some of them are Kafirs (disbelievers) who worship `Aly and call upon him, and they worship Fatimah, Al-Husayn and others. Some of them claim that Jibril (peace be upon him) betrayed the trust and that Prophethood belonged to `Aly not to Muhammad. There are also others among them, such as Al-Imamiyyah , i.e. Al-Rafidah Al-Ithna 'Ashriyyah (a Shi`ah group denying the caliphates of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq and `Umar ibn Al-Khattab and making accusations against them and many other Companions of the Prophet) who worship `Aly and say that their Imams are better than the angels and Prophets. There are many groups among them; some are Kafirs (disbelievers) and some are not Kafirs (disbelievers). The moderate among them are those who believe that `Aly was better than the three (Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman). Those who say this are not Kafirs (disbeliever) but in error, because `Aly was the fourth, and Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, 'Umar and 'Uthman were better than him. If a person prefers him over them then he is mistaken and is going against the consensus of the Companions, but he is not a Kafir (disbeliever). The Shiites are of different levels and types. Those wishing to know more about this may refer to the books of the scholars, such as Al-Khutut Al-`Aridah

by Muhibb Al-Din Al-Khateeb [available in English under the same title, translated by Abu Ameenah Bilaal Philips], Minhaj Al-Sunnah by Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, and other books that have been written on this topic, such as Al-Shi'ah wa'l-Sunnah by Ihsan Ilahi Zahir [also available in English translation] and many other books which explain their errors and evils - we ask Allah to keep us safe and sound. Among the most evil of them are the Twelver Imams and Nusayriyyah, who are also called Al-Rafidah because they rejected (rafadu) Zayd ibn 'Aly when he refused to disavow the two Shaykhs Abu Bakr and 'Umar, so they went against him and rejected him. Not everyone who claims to be a Muslim can be accepted as such. If one claims to be a Muslim, his claim should be examined. Who worships Allah alone and believes in His Messenger, and follows that which he brought, is a true Muslim. If a person claims to be a Muslim yet worships Al-Husayn, Fatimah, Al-Badawy, Al-`Aydarus, or anyone else, then he is not a Muslim. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound. Similarly, anyone who reviles the faith, or does not pray, even if he says that he is a Muslim, is not a Muslim. The same applies to anyone who mocks at the faith or mocks at Prayer, Zakah, Fast, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who disbelieves in him, or says that he was ignorant or that he did not convey the message in full or convey the message clearly. All such people are Kafirs (disbelievers). We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound!

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38- A question about Al-Rafidah

Q: A man's parents belong to Al-Rafidah (a Shi`ah group denying the caliphates of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq and `Umar ibn Al-Khattab and making accusations against them and many other Companions of the Prophet), how should he behave towards them?

A: He should call them to Allah and advise them. Yet, If he realizes that they are adhering to that which is false, he should disown them, but at the same time fear Allah in dealing with them. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not; but behave with them in the world kindly) Which means to do good to them, advise them, call them to Allah and supplicate to Him to guide them. He should not be violent with them, since they are his parents, and before Allah, they have a great right even if they are Kuffar (disbelievers), Jews or Christians and he is a Muslim. Again, he should call them to Allah without treating them harshly in accordance with the Saying of Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified): (but behave with them in the world kindly) since parents are not like any other people.

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Difference between Ahl-ul-Sunnah and Shi`ah

Q: What is the difference between Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) and Shi`ah (Shi'ites)?

A: There are differences between the two sects. Allah has neither created the people who do righteous deeds equal to those who commit evil deeds nor did He create the pious equal to the wicked people.

We should differentiate between Kafirs (disbelievers), Muslims, Shi`ah, and other sects. Shi`ah are Mubtadi`'s (those who introduce innovations in religion). They are divided into many sects such as Rafidah (a Shi`ah group denying the caliphates of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq and `Umar ibn Al-Khattab and making accusations against them and many other Companions of the Prophet), Al-Nasiriyyah, Isma`ilite, etc. Some of the Shi`ah worship Ahl-ul-Bayt (members of the Prophet's extended Muslim family) and they call upon them instead of Allah. These sects are Kafir. We ask Allah to grant us safety!

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40- Al-Isma`iliyyah

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the respected brother Shaykh..., may Allah guide you to all that pleases Him and help you to support His Din (religion)! Amen.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I am so pleased that you adopted the Madh-hab (School of jurisprudence) of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) and abandoned the Bid`ahs (innovations in religion) and whims of Al-Isma`iliyyah (Isma`ilism: The second largest part of the Shi'ites, after the mainstream Twelvers. The Isma`ilites get their name from their acceptance of Isma`il ibn Ja`far as the divinely appointed spiritual successor (Imam) to Ja`far Al-Sadiq) that oppose our purified Shari`ah (Islamic law). All praise be to Allah Alone. May Allah grant you keeping firm on the truth, guide you to understand His Religion comprehensively and hold fast to it! May Allah make us along with all Muslims amongst the guiding and guided people! Besides, I am so pleased that you visited me in Ta'if on the night of Sunday corresponding to 14/01/1419 A.H. On this visit I told you that it is Wajib (obligatory) on every Muslim to stick to the Religion of Allah and to worship Him Alone as the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Sahabah (Companions) did. Every Muslim has also to keep firm on abidance by Din and calling people to it. Such a Din is the true one that was followed by the Sahabah and all those who followed them in righteousness. It is the Din that Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah have been following until now. The main principles of this Din are

to believe in Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him), to worship Allah Alone, to avoid all that contradicts Shari`ah as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) commands His Prophet (peace be upon him) to tell people: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم to mankind): "If you (really) love Allâh then follow me (i.e. accept Islâmic Monotheism, follow the Qur'ân and the Sunnah), Allâh will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.") And: (Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم): "This is my way; I invite unto Allâh (i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to Allâh i.e. to the Oneness of Allâh - Islâmic Monotheism with sure knowledge). And Glorified and Exalted be Allâh (above all that they associate as partners with Him). And I am not of the Mushrikûn (polytheists, pagans, idolaters and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh; those who worship others along with Allâh or set up rivals or partners to Allâh).") Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ("And verily, this (i.e. Allâh's Commandments mentioned in the above two Verses 151 and 152) is My Straight Path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His Path. This He has ordained for you that you may become Al-Muttaqûn (the pious - see V.2:2).") Moreover, Allah (Glorified be He) commands His Servants in Surah (Qur'anic chapter) Al-Fatihah to ask Him to guide them to the Straight Path. In addition, Allah (Glorified be He) says in Surah Al-Shura that His Prophet (peace be upon him) guides people to Him; a guidance of declaration and notification: (And verily, you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the Straight Path (i.e.

Allâh's Religion of Islâmic Monotheism).) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says:

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(And the foremost to embrace Islâm of the Muhâjirûn (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansâr (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhâjirûn) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allâh is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.)

On the other hand, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith): (The best people are those living in my generation, then those who will follow them, then those who will follow the latter.) And: (You must follow my Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Stick to them and hold fast to them. Avoid novelties, for every novelty is a Bid`ah (innovation in religion), and every Bid`ah is an error.)

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs are Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Aly (may Allah be pleased with them all).

There are many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and Hadiths to this effect. Anyway, I answered your questions and published this in a small booklet some years ago.

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This booklet is attached to this letter so that you may read it and show it to whomever you like. May Allah guide through it those who contradict the Sunnah and make you a reason for their guidance! It is related in a Hadith Sahih that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) when he sent the latter to the Jews in Khaybar: (Invite them to Islam and inform them of the Rights of Allah which is obligatory on them, for, by Allah, if Allah guides even one person through you that is better for you than possessing a whole lot of red camels.) (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim). I ask Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) to bless you and make you guiding and guided. May Allah enable you to benefit your Muslim brothers! May He keep us firm on guidance! Verily, Allah is the Most Gracious, the Most Bountiful! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of Council of Senior Scholars and Department of Scholarly Research and Ifta'

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41- Ruling on dealing with Shi`ah

**Q: I am a teacher and I have some Shi`ah (Shi'ites) colleagues; how should I deal with them? A:** You have to advise them, guide them to goodness, and inform them that making accusations against the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) is not permissible. You have to tell them that it is Wajib (obligatory) on every Muslim to love `Aly and ask Allah to be pleased with him but without revering him excessively. It is not permissible to claim that `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) knows the Ghayb (the Unseen), that Du`a' (supplication) may be made to Him along with Allah, or that his help may be sought. The same applies to Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn and Ja`far Al-Sadiq as well as all other Sahabah and Salaf (righteous predecessors). However, if your Shi`ah colleagues persist in Bid`ah (innovation in religion); you have to abandon them. In such case, you have neither to greet them nor to answer their greeting.

On the other hand, if they do not disclose their Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and show that they comply with your advice; you have to give them the same treatment of the hypocrites as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to deal with the latter in Madinah. Whoever manifests their abidance by Islam and abstains from evil are treated as Muslims and their inward beliefs are to be judged by Allah.

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42- Ruling on sitting with Mubtadi`s (ones who introduces innovations in religion)

Q: Is it permissible to sit with people who indulge in Bid`ahs (innovations in religion) and participate in their lessons?

A: It is not permissible for you to sit with or consider them friends. You have to forbid them from doing such Bid`ahs and warn them against their dangers. May Allah protect us!

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43- Ruling on hiring a Mubtadi` in religious jobs

Q: In Yemen, some righteous people build Masjids (Mosques), but they do not understand the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) and they hire Mubtadi` (one who introduces innovations in religion) whose beliefs are ruined. Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) go to this Masjid frequently. What is ruling on this matter?

A: This matter should be tackled with wisdom and not by using force. You may also refer to the ruler so that Fitnah (sedition) or riots would not occur and to employ Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah instead. If these Masjids were built by a Mubtadi`, the ruler should try to avoid Fitnah as they might say that they have built these Masjids and no one has the right to take it and ask Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah to build their own Masjids. The ruler should deal with this matter rationally to be able to employ a Mu'adhin (caller to Prayer) and Imam (the one who leads congregational Prayer) who follow the creed of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah.

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44- Warning against a false publication

All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family and Companions!

I have read a publication spread out by many people whether out of ignorance or out of evil intention. They started by Allah's (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴾Nay! But worship Allâh (Alone and none else), and be among the grateful.﴿ then they mentioned some other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and said some words which mean, "Concern yourself with sending these Ayahs to bring about goodness, prosperity, wealth and success." Afterwards they mentioned that they have been spread out all over the world and that whoever pays attention to them, will achieve great success but whoever neglects them, they will be afflicted with some accidents. They mentioned that the concerned Ayahs prevent evils and bring about cure and goodness, four days after reading them.

Such a publication has no sound basis, but it is a source of lies, fabrications and sayings without knowledge. Moreover, the assumption that it brings about goodness and dispels evils and that whoever is concerned with it, will be successful and whoever neglects it, will be afflicted with accidents, is Batil (null and void) and it defames the `Aqidah (creed) and leads our hearts to adhere to this publication and turn away from Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

Therefore, I believed that I should warn Muslims against it. I recommended them to tear it away wherever they may find it and inform their Muslim brothers of its falseness. Moreover I told them that belief in what it comprises violates Shari`ah (Islamic law) and defames `Aqidah. It is a false baseless belief, moreover it is a sort of telling lies against Allah and a null and void assumption. It is of the same type as the commandment attributed to the servant of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) chamber. We previously drew your attention to its falseness and confirmed that it is untruthful and has no sound basis and so is the assumption of those who spread out the brochure. Thus both publications are extremely null and void, so every Muslim should be cautious of them and warn other Muslims against them in accordance with Allah's (the Glorified) Saying: ﴾Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwâ (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression.﴿ And: ﴾The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rûf (i.e. Islâmic Monotheism and all that Islâm orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islâm has forbidden)﴿

There is no doubt that these two publications are a sort of abomination that should be prohibited. Our authorities have to search for those who spread them out and afflict them and the likes with a deterrent punishment. We ask Allah (Exalted be He) to grant us and all Muslims the comprehensive understanding of Din (religion) and to guide us to hold fast to it and denounce all that opposes it. We seek refuge with Allah from delusive temptations and Satanic insinuations. We ask Allah (Exalted be He) as well to suppress the enemies of Islam wherever they are and frustrate their schemes. Verily,

He is the All-Hearing, the Ever Near! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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45- Ruling on `Aqidah of Ba`th Party

Q: Are president of Iraq and members of the Ba`th Party that he led considered Kafirs (disbelievers)?

A: All Ba`thists are Kafirs including the president of Iraq as they oppose Shari`ah (Islamic law) and feud with it.

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46- Ruling on Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf

Q: Is Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf a Kafir (disbeliever) or wrongdoer?

A: He is sinful and a wrongdoer but not Kafir.

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47- Elaborating the ruling on rulers who does not judge by what Allah has revealed

Q: Your Eminence Shaykh! Could you please tell me whether all rulers who do not apply Allah's Laws are Kafirs (disbelievers) though they acknowledge the obligation of acting upon the Laws of Allah? Is it not permissible to rebel against such rulers? Does their

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loyalty to Mushriks (those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) all over the world render them Kafirs?

A: People of knowledge give detailed answers to such question. However, Muslims - especially scholars - have to advise such rulers, guide them to goodness, tell them about beneficial things, and call them to obey Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger (peace be upon him). The concerned rulers also have to be advised to apply the rulings of Shari`ah (Islamic law) for Allah (Exalted be He) may make this a reason for their guidance. On the other hand, Muslims are not to rebel against the concerned rulers as doing so leads to Fitnahs (trials) and unjust blood shed. It is worth mentioning that rulers who judge not by what Allah has revealed are not of the same beliefs. If they indulge in such sin while believing that it is permissible for them to do so, that judging by other than what Allah has revealed is better than judging by what Allah has revealed, or that they are both equal; they are Kafirs. If they indulge in the same sin because of reasons such as bribes, mildness of their soldiers, etc., while recognizing that doing so is a sin; they are not considered Kafirs. The status of this second category of rulers is stated by Ibn `Abbas as being a degree lesser than real Kufr (disbelief) and Zhulm (wrongdoing). Nevertheless, if a ruler considers judging by man-made laws Halal (lawful), that they are better than or equal to Allah's Laws; such doing is tantamount to committing Riddah (apostasy). The same applies

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to any other layman who believes the same.

If a person thus claims that judging by other than what Allah has revealed is permissible, they are Kafir even if they are not the ruler or the president.

The issue of rebelling against the ruler needs to be reconsidered for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Unless you noticed him having open Kufr for which you would have a proof with us from Allah.﴿ Yet, this may not be done unless there is a strong Ummah (nation based on one creed) that can remove the wrongdoing ruler. Consequently, it is not permissible for individuals and masses who do mischief in the land but not reformation to rebel against the ruler as this harms people and does not avail them.

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48- Ruling on deeming lawful judging by laws other than Allah's

Q: Does Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim (may Allah be merciful with him) advocate the view that rulers are absolutely Kafirs (disbelievers) ? A: He holds the view that anyone who deems ruling by laws other than Allah's Laws is a Kafir.

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This is the view of all scholars: Anyone who deems judging by anything other than what Allah has revealed lawful is a Kafir; but anyone who does so for any other reason without deeming this lawful commits a lesser degree of Kufr (disbelief).

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49- Are Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism considered religions?

Q: On the evening of Friday, 4th of Safar 1403 A.H., I watched the TV show "The Natural World". The episode was about India.

While giving a quick introduction to the episode, the announcer said that India is indeed called the land of religions where you can find Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, etc. Please explain the following:

Are the beliefs the announcer mentioned considered to be real faiths?

Were they revealed and sent down by Allah?

A: All that people believe in and whereby perform acts of worship is called a Din (religion), even if it is false. Examples of these beliefs include Buddhism, paganism, Judaism, Hinduism, Christianity

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and other false concepts. In Surah Al-Kafirun, Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾"To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islâmic Monotheism)."﴿ Allah calls paganism a religion. However, the only true Din is Islam as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Truly, the religion with Allâh is Islâm.﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And whoever seeks a religion other than Islâm, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.﴿ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islâm as your religion.﴿

Islam is to worship Allah Alone associating no partners with Him, obey His Commands, avoid His Prohibitions, abide by the limits He has set, and believe in what Allah and His Messenger informed us about regarding the past and the future. None of these false religions was revealed or accepted by Allah; rather, they are all innovated. Islam is the Din of all the messengers, however, their laws differed. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way.﴿

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50- Refuting the theory that man evolved from an ape-like creature

Q: It is well-known that some people think they were evolved from animals following Darwinism, what is the view of Your Eminence regarding this?

A: The theory of Darwin states that man evolved from an ape-like creature and that human beings are talking animals and that we are all animals. Allah created a life for the sons of Adam and granted them minds and the ability to speak. This abominable theory is false according to Ijma` (consensus of scholars). Apes are a species, dogs are a species and so are the pigs, cats, lions, tigers, cheetahs, etc. As for human beings, they are distinct speaking and rational species whom Allah created from semen of despised water. Allah created our father Adam (peace be upon him) from clay, so he is a distinct species and so are all sons of Adam. The Jinn (creatures created from fire) - as well - are created from a smokeless flame of fire. Every kind of animals is a distinct species, even the ants.

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51- Refuting some of the misconceptions of Orientalists

Q: Orientalists claim that Islam retained some sorts of idolatry such as kissing Al-Hajar Al-Aswad (the Black Stone in a corner of the Ka`bah); how can we refute this?

A: Kissing Al-Hajar Al-Aswad is not a sort of idolatry. Rather, it is something that Allah (Exalted be He) has ordained for us for a great wisdom. Muslims who kiss Al-Hajar Al-Aswad do not imitate the practice or the `Ibadah (worship) of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance) for Allah commands His Servants to do whatever He wills as His independent Shar` (Law) that has no relation to the conditions of Jahiliyyah. In fact, the affairs of Jahiliyyah comprised some good issues that Islam consented to such as Diyah (blood money) as being one hundred camels, Qasamah (exoneration from an accusation of murder by swearing fifty oaths), and kissing Al-Hajar Al-Aswad. To get to the point, kissing Al-Hajar Al-Aswad entails exalting Allah (Glorified be He) and seeking His Pleasure but not seeking blessings from Al-Hajar Al-Aswad itself or invoking it. Facing Al-Hajar Al-Aswad and Yemeni Corner (southern corner of the Ka`bah facing Yemen) is an act of obedience to Allah Who tests His Servants as to whether they obey or disobey Him.

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Allah thus affirmed facing Al-Hajar Al-Aswad and the Yemeni Corner to test His Servants. Accordingly, when `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) kissed Al-Hajar Al-Aswad; he addressed it saying: "I know that you are just stone that does neither harm nor benefit. Had I not seen the Prophet (peace be upon him) kissing you, I would not have kissed you.

Another quality of the people of Jahiliyyah that Islam affirms is that they used to treat their guests hospitably. Likewise, the Prophet (peace be upon him) called to all other good traits that Allah loves of people of Jahiliyyah and that Islam affirms.

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Chapter on Ruqyahs and amulets

52- Treatment by Ruqyah

Q: A woman suffers from a serious disease and receives medical treatment whose side effects include loss of hair, etc., and that does not eliminate the disease completely. Her husband advised her to see a person to make Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and saying supplications over the sick seeking healing) for her. The concerned person stipulated that the woman in question has to give up medicines and continue exercising Ruqyah. My question is whether conforming to such advice is sufficient for following possible means to recovery? It may be worth mentioning that such a Ruqyah was tried for similar cases and it was a reason for recovery by the Permission of Allah. Provide us with your beneficial answer please. May Allah reward you with the best!

A: If the reality is as you mentioned in the question, Ruqyah is sufficient. All praise be to Allah Alone.

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53- Ruling on suffocating a possessed patient while reciting Ruqyah

Q: Is it permissible for a person who exercises Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and saying supplications over the sick seeking healing) to beat, suffocate, and speak to Jinn (creatures created from fire)?

A: Some of this was done by some of our early scholars such as Shaykh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be merciful with him) who used to speak to Jinn, beat, and suffocate them until they go out (of the body of the patient). However, exaggerating in doing so as is the practice of some reciters of Ruqyah is not permissible.

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A question about Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and saying supplications over the sick seeking healing)

Q: Dear respected Shaykh, - may Allah protect you - I was with one of my friends and he said to me: If you want to discover something missing through the Book of Allah, do the following:

1- Get the Book of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and open the Book exactly at the Surah of Al-Kahf, on the following Ayah

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﴿And the Book (one's Record) will be placed (in the right hand for a believer in the Oneness of Allâh, and in the left hand for a disbeliever in the Oneness of Allâh), and you will see the Mujrimûn (criminals, polytheists, sinners) fearful of that which is (recorded) therein.﴾ to the end of the Ayah.

2- Get a door's key, provided that the door would be in the direction of Al-Qiblah (Ka`bah-direction faced in Prayer).

3- Place the key on the line of the Ayah of Surah Al-Kahf.

4- Bring a piece of clean cloth and utter Shahadah, namely saying "Ashhadu Alla Ilaha Illah Allah wa Ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasul Allah" (I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) and let the key free.

5- Recite "A`udhu Billahi Mina Al-Shaytani Al-Rajim" (I take refuge with Allah against the rejected devil). "Bism Allahi Al-Rahmany Al-Rahim" (In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) three times and say: O Allah! I ask You by the right of Your Name. I ask You by the right of Your Glorious Book. I ask You by the right of Your Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) the generous, to hide the falsehood and show the truth. O Allah! if so and so has taken the object from the house of so and so, roll this book. Let it be known - may Allah protect you - that there was a robbery in one of the houses and when they did this, the pointer referred to the robber and money was found in his pocket. He says: This action is not against the Ayahs of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him); could you kindly answer this in details. May Allah reward you!

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A: This act is Bid`ah (innovation in religion), void and has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic law). It is obligatory to leave it and warn the people against it because of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: ﴿He who innovates things in our affairs for which there is no valid (reason) (commits sin) and these are to be rejected.﴾ (Agreed on its authenticity). In another narration of Muslim (may Allah be Merciful with him): ﴿He who did any act for which there is no sanction from our behalf, that is to be rejected.﴾ May Allah grant us success!

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55- The ruling on using incense to drive demons away

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the respected brother, His Highness Prince..., may Allah grant him success, and increase him in knowledge and faith!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!). To proceed:

I have received your letter which contains three

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questions and here are the answers: The second: Some people use some incense that is sold at perfume dealers which is called "Naqd" which they claim that it drives demons away?

A: I do not know any Shar`y (Islamic legal) origin for this action and it is obligatory not to do it because it is one of the superstitions which has no basis at all. Demons are expelled by frequent Dhikr Remembrance of Allah), reciting the Glorious Qur'an and seeking refuge with the perfect words of Allah from the evil of that He created. It was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that he said: ﴿When anyone lands at a place, and then says: 'I seek refuge in the Perfect Word of Allah from the evil of what He has created,' nothing will harm him until he marches from that stopping place.﴾ ﴿A man said to the Prophet (peace be upon him), "O, Prophet of Allah! I was stung by a scorpion yesterday." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to him, "If you had said "I seek refuge in the Perfect Word of Allah from the evil of that He created", nothing would have done you any harm."﴾ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿He who says in the morning: "In the name of Allah, when Whose name is mentioned nothing on Earth or in Heaven can cause harm, and He is the Hearer, the Knower" thrice, nothing will harm him

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until the evening. And if anyone says this in the morning, he will not suffer sudden affliction until the evening.﴾

I ask Allah to grant you, us as well as all our Muslim brothers to useful knowledge and act according to it for He is All-Hearing, Ever-Near! As-salamu `Alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!).

General Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, President of the Council of Senior Scholars and Chairman of the Departments of Scholarly Research and Ifta'

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56- Ruling on wearing amulets

From `Abdul `Aziz bin `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother, may Allah grant him success! Amen

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I have received your letter dated 7/2/1390 A.H.

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This includes that a woman, whose children die, asked you to inquire about the ruling on wearing amulets for protection from Satan or female Qarin (a personal Jinn companion for humans).

A: It is not permissible to wear amulets because of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: ﴾If one wears an amulet, Allah will not accomplish their affairs for them.﴿ According to another narration: ﴾Whoever wears an amulet commits an act of Shirk.﴿

The amulets, which are called Al-Jami`ah, Hijab or Al-Hirz (protective amulet), are totally prohibited, whether they contain Ayahs of Qur'an or other writings.

The said woman is obliged to trust and depend on Allah. Whoever observes Tawakkul (putting one's trust in Allah) sincerely, Allah is sufficient for them. It is well known that her children die according to Allah's Will not because of Satan or the female Qarin. One's death is determined by a term as Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾when their term comes, neither can they delay it nor can they advance it an hour (or a moment).﴿

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This woman should be advised to shun depending on the weak means leading to Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). The lawful means including the prescribed supplications for refuge and protection, Ruqyah (reciting Qur'an and saying supplications over the sick seeking healing) and the other prescribed means would suffice.

May Allah guide us all to understand His religion well and to hold fast to it. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh

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Chapter on seeking blessings

57- A question on Tabarruk (seeking blessings)

Q: Was it authentically reported in Sunnah that blessings may be sought from other than the prophets?

A: We have no evidence in this concern except that which was authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that Allah favored him with blessings that can be sought from his body and sweat. It is not proper to seek blessings from scholars or anyone for no one should be equated to the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is an exclusive privilege for the Prophet (peace be upon him). Allah has placed blessings in his sweat, saliva, water he used for Wudu' (ablution) and hair. The Prophet (peace be upon him) distributed his hair among people in the Farewell Hajj and ordered his Companions to seek blessing from the water he used for Wudu' as well as from his sweat because of the blessings Allah had placed in him and no one should be equated to him. None of the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) sought blessings from Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, `Umar, `Uthman or `Aly, who are considered

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the best people after the prophets. This act shows that this is a privilege granted to the Prophet (peace be upon him) only. As for what some people do regarding seeking blessings from the scholars, pious people, the walls of Ka`bah, and its Kiswah (black brocade cloth that covers the Ka`bah) these actions have no evidence and should be prevented.

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The ruling on seeking blessings from the Prophet's grave

Is it permissible to seek blessings in the grave of the Prophet (peace be upon him)? A: This act is not permissible and it is a Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and one of the means leading to Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Seeking blessings from such and such, or the walls of Al-Ka`bah, its columns and the like is Bid`ah and can lead to Shirk if the one doing so thinks that they are sources of blessings. If they do so on the basis that it is allowed, their doing will be considered as Bida`ah and should be avoided. Indeed, Allah made it allowable to seek blessings from the Prophet (peace be upon him) during his lifetime. Likewise, Allah (may He be Exalted) legislated seeking blessings in the water of Zamzam (a well near the Ka`bah) for Allah made it blessed.

Accordingly, a believer should adhere to the Shari`ah (Islamic law) of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) and keep away from what disagrees with it. May Allah grant us success!

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59- Tabarruk (seeking blessings) from Ka`bah

Q: Is it permissible to seek blessings from the stones or relics found in Makkah or Al-Ka`bah? A: There is nothing special about the stones or trees grown in Makkah for people to seek blessings from them. On the other hand, the grass found and grown in Makkah is banned to cut. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has forbidden to cut the grass of this city except for a kind of it known as Al-Idhkhar, as it is used in the houses and graves. Consequently, the stones of Al-Haram or Makkah have nothing special to seek blessings from or move them to another country.

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Chapter on offering sacrifices for someone other than Allah

60 - The ruling on offering sacrifice to someone other than Allah

Q: What is your opinion regarding the people who offer sacrifices at one of the Awliya's (pious people) graves, i.e., any spot where Muslim graves exist? Did the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) command one of his Companions to do so?

A: If the slaughterer offers sacrifices to the dead person, it will be a major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam). Offering a sacrifice is an act of worship and acts of worship are the sole rights of Allah. He who directs any act of worship to anyone other than Allah, will be a disbeliever. Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "Verily, my Salât (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).﴾ ﴿"He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims."﴾

If slaughtering is for the sake of Allah at this grave, it is impermissible because it is Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and one of the means of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Means take the same ruling as the ends in forbiddance. May Allah grant us success!

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Ruling on giving Sadaqah and performing Hajj on behalf of someone who slaughters sacrifices to other than Allah

Q: The questioner says that he was told that his father used to slaughter sacrifices to other than Allah. He now wants to give Sadaqah (voluntary charity) and perform Hajj on his behalf, as his father did that because there were no scholars or people to guide and advise him. What is the ruling on this? A: If his father was known for being a good, righteous Muslim, it is not permissible for him to believe what else is said about him by people of unknown credibility. It is Sunnah (supererogatory act of worship following the example of the Prophet) to supplicate and give Sadaqah for him, unless he definitely knows that he died in a state of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). This must be confirmed by two or more trustworthy and fair witnesses, who testify that they saw him slaughtering animals for other than Allah, such as for the dead or others, or they heard him supplicating to other than Allah, only then should he stop supplicating to Allah for him, and his case is for Allah to judge. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked for permission to seek forgiveness for his mother, it was not granted to him, although she died in the time of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance)

as a follower of the religion of the Kafirs (disbelievers). But when he (peace be upon him) asked permission from his Lord to visit her grave, He granted him permission to do that. This shows that it is not permissible to supplicate to Allah for someone who dies as a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), even if they were ignorant, nor can you ask Allah to forgive them, or give Sadaqah or perform Hajj on their behalf. As for those who died in a place where Da'wah (calling to Islam) had not reached them, their case is for Allah to judge (Glorified be He). The correct opinion among the scholars is that they will be tested on the Day of Resurrection; if they obey Allah they will enter Jannah (Paradise), and if they disobey Him they will enter Hellfire, according to Sahih (Hadith that have been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish) Hadiths that were reported in this regard.

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Chapter on Vowing

62- Ruling on Vowing for other than Allah

Q: A questioner asks: Can I pray for my dead father who used to ask for help from dead people and offer sacrifices to them?

A: One who died on Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) is not to be supplicated for. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allâh's Forgiveness for the Mushrikûn (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh), even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are the dwellers of the Fire (because they died in a state of disbelief).﴿ One is forbidden to supplicate to Allah for one's parents if they died on Shirk. When the Prophet's (peace be upon him) paternal uncle Abu Talib died on Shirk, the Prophet (peace be upon him) wanted to ask forgiveness for him but Allah prohibited him from doing so. O Servant of Allah! You should neither ask forgiveness for him nor supplicate for or against him. His affair is to Allah as long as he died worshipping graves and asking, seeking help from, and vowing for the dead. This is major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam), such as the one worshipping idols, we seek refuge with Allah from this.

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Chapter on seeking help with other than Allah

63- The ruling on Invoking the (Aqtab) and (Awtad) among humans and seeking their help

A question from brother, from Yemen in which he says:

There are some people in my country who repeat the following supplications which have no basis in religion. Some of which are innovated and some are parts of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). Moreover, they attribute these supplications to Amir Al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Believers) `Aly ibn Abu Talib (May Allah be pleased with him) and others. They recite these supplications in the sessions of remembering Allah or in Masjids (mosques) after Al-Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer claiming that they draw them closer to Allah such as: "By the right of Allah, O men of Allah, provide us with the aid of Allah and be the help sent to us from Allah." They say: O Qutbs (Sufi title denoting a "Perfect Master"), O prominent characters! O masters, respond. O supporters, intercede to Allah on behalf of this servant who stands at your door because he is afraid of his negligence. Help, O Messenger of Allah. You are my only resort and you are the only one to ask. You (people we call) are the best of the pious because of Hamzah, the master of martyrs and from whom else could we seek help! Help, O Messenger of Allah." They also say: "O Allah, invoke peace and blessings on the one whom You made the reason of revealing Your Mighty Secrets and the Eminence of Your Merciful Lights,

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who became the deputy of the Divine Presence and the vicegerent of Your Divine Secrets". Could you please explain what is Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and what is Shirk? Is offering Salah behind an Imam who repeats such supplications valid?

A: All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the seal of all prophets, our Prophet Muhammad, his family, his Companions, and those who follow his guidance until the Day of Recompense. To proceed: Let it be known, may Allah grant you success, that Allah (Exalted be He) has created the creation and sent the messengers (peace be upon them) in order to worship Him alone and do not associate others in worship with Him. He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴿ Worship means to obey Allah as well as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by doing what Allah and His Messenger commanded and leaving what they prohibited out of belief in Allah and His Messenger and sincerity to Allah in actions as Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ (i.e. any command). He commands the people to worship Him alone. He (may He Praised) says:

﴾All the praises and thanks be to Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists).﴿ ﴾The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.﴿ ﴾The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)﴿ ﴾You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).﴿ By these Ayahs, Allah (He may be Praised) explained that He is the Only One entitled to be worshipped and asked for help. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only. Surely the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allâh only.﴿ He (Exalted be He) further says: ﴾So, call you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the believers) upon (or invoke) Allâh making (your) worship pure for Him (Alone) (by worshipping none but Him and by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only and not to show off and not to set up rivals with Him in worship), however much the disbelievers (in the Oneness of Allâh) may hate (it).﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And the mosques are for Allâh (Alone): so invoke not anyone along with Allâh.﴿ Ayahs are numerous in this context and they all refer to dedication of worship to Allah alone. It is well-established that all kinds of invocation are acts of worship, so it is not permissible for anyone to supplicate to anyone but their Lord or ask help or seek aid except from Him according to these Ayahs and the Ayahs related to the same context, unlike the usual ordinary matters and physical reasons which the living person is capable of because this is not an act of worship. It is permissible, according to legal texts and consensus of Muslim scholars, that man seeks help with another living person who is capable of directing the regular matters which he can do, such as seeking help

with him to ward off the evil of his son, servant, dog and the like. It is also permissible to seek help with the present or absent living person who is able to direct matters by the physical reasons such as writing in order to fix his house or repair his car and so on. The proof to this is the Saying of Allah (Exalted be He) about the story of Musa (Moses, peace be upon him): ﴾The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe﴿ i.e. a man seeks help with his companions in Jihad (fighting in the Cause of Allah), war and so on. As for seeking help with the dead, Jinn, angles, trees and stones, it is a kind of major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam) which is a part of the actions of the earlier polytheists with their gods such as Al-`Uzza, Al-Lat and other gods. Likewise, to seek help with people who people believe are the living pious people in matters that can not be done but by Allah such as curing the sick, guiding the hearts, entering Paradise, safety from Hellfire and so on. The previous Ayahs as well as similar ones and Hadiths indicate the obligation of directing all the hearts to Allah in all matters and devote worship to Him alone because the creatures were created for this reason and with which they were commanded as previously stated in the Ayahs.

Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Worship Allâh and join none with Him (in worship)﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allâh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him)﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the Hadith of Mu`adh (may Allah be pleased with him): ﴾The right of Allah over His slaves is that they should worship Him and not associate anything with Him.﴿ Agreed on its authenticity. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said in the Hadith of Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him): ﴾"Whoever dies while still invoking a rival (in worship) to Allah, will enter Hell (Fire)."﴿ (Related by Al-Bukhari). It

is related in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) from the Hadith of Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) ﴿that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) sent Mu`adh to Yemen, he said to him: You will soon find yourself in a community of the People of the Book, so first call them to testify that there is no god but Allah...﴾ in other wording: ﴿Invite them to testify that none has the right to be worshipped

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but Allah, and that I am the Messenger of Allah.﴾ In the narration of Al-Bukhari: ﴿Invite them to worship Allah alone.﴾ It is reported in Sahih (book of authentic Hadith) Muslim from Tariq ibn Ashyam Al-Ashja`y (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿He who professed that there is none worthy of worship (in truth) but Allah and made a denial of everything which the people worship beside Allah, his property and blood became inviolable, and their affairs rest with Allah.﴾

The Hadiths are numerous in this regard. Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) is the root of Islam, the basis of religion and the foundation of all matters. It is the most important act of worship, it is the reason of creating both human and Jinn and the reason of sending all messengers (peace be upon them) as the previous Ayahs explained such as the Saying of Allah (Exalted be He): ﴿And I (Allâh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).﴾ Among the other proofs is the Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Saying:

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﴿And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴾ and His (He may be Praised) Saying: ﴿And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) but We revealed to him (saying): Lâ ilâha illa Ana [none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allâh)], so worship Me (Alone and none else)."﴾ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says about Nuh (Noah), Hud, Salih, Shu`ayb (peace be upon them) when they said to their people: ﴿Worship Allâh! You have no other Ilâh (God) but Him.﴾ This is the claim of all messengers as the previous two Ayahs indicated.

The enemies of the messengers admitted that the messengers commanded them to single out Allah with worship and abandon other gods which are worshipped besides Him as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in the story of their worships that they said to Hud (peace be upon him): ﴿"You have come to us that we should worship Allâh Alone and forsake that which our fathers used to worship.﴾ Allah (may He be Praised and Glorified) says about Quraysh when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) called them to single out Allah with worship and abandon what they worship besides Him such as angles, pious people, idols, trees and others: ﴿"Has he made the âlihah (gods) (all) into One Ilâh (God - Allâh). Verily, this is a curious thing!"﴾

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Allah (Exalted be He) says about them in Surah Al-Safat: ﴿Truly, when it was said to them: Lâ ilâha illallâh "(none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh)," they puffed themselves up with pride (i.e. denied it).﴾ ﴿And (they) said: "Are we going to abandon our âlihah (gods) for the sake of a mad poet?"﴾ The Ayahs which indicate this meaning are numerous.

From the Ayahs and Hadiths we have mentioned, it is now clear to you - may Allah guide me and you to understand the religion and recognize the right of the Lord of all the Worlds- that these supplications and types of seeking help which you mentioned in your question are kinds of major Shirk because they indicate worshipping others beside Allah and requesting things from others who are not capable of fulfilling these needs such as the dead and the absent; which is worse than the polytheism of the earlier people because the earlier people used to associate others with Allah in the time of prosperity but in cases of hardship, they devoted their worship to Allah because they know that He is the All-Able to rescue them from hardships as Allah (Exalted be He) says in His Glorious Book about those polytheists: ﴿And when they embark on a ship, they invoke Allâh, making their Faith pure for Him only: but when He brings them safely to land, behold, they give a share of their worship to others.﴾ Allah (may He be Praised and Glorified)

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addresses them in another Ayah in Surah Al-Isra' saying: ﴿And when harm touches you upon the sea, those that you call upon vanish from you except Him (Allâh Alone). But when He brings you safe to land, you turn away (from Him). And man is ever ungrateful.﴾ If one of those latecomer polytheists said: We do not mean that those people benefit by themselves, heal our sick, help us or harm their enemy but we seek their intercession with Allah.

The answer is: This is what the earlier disbelievers used to believe that their gods can not create, provide sustenance, benefit or harm by themselves and the Qur'an proves this. They only wanted their intercession, high standing and drawing them closer to Allah as He (may He be Praised and Glorified) says in Surah Yunus (peace be upon him): ﴿And they worship besides Allâh things that harm them not, nor profit them, and they say: "These are our intercessors with Allâh."﴾ So, Allah answered them by His (Exalted be He) Saying: ﴿And they worship besides Allâh things that harm them not, nor profit them, and they say: "These are our intercessors with Allâh." Say: "Do you inform Allâh of that which He knows not in the heavens and on the earth?" Glorified and Exalted is He above all that which they associate as partners (with Him)!﴾

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Allah (He may be Praised) explained that He does not know of intercessor in the heavens and on earth in the way the polytheists believe and what Allah does not know, surley does not exist because nothing is hidden from Him. Allah (He may be Praised) says in Surah Al-Zumar: ﴿The revelation of this Book (the Qur'ân) is from Allâh, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴾ ﴿Verily We have sent down the Book to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) in truth: So worship Allâh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allâh's sake only.﴾ ﴿Surely the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allâh only.﴾ Allah (He may be Praised) explained that worship is for Him alone and the servants must devote worship to Him because His Command to the Prophet (peace be upon him) of devoting worship to Him is a command for all people.

The meaning of religion here is to worship and worship means to obey Him as well as His Messenger (peace be upon him) as mentioned previously including supplication, seeking help, fear, hope, slaughtering, vows, Salah, Sawm (Fast) and other matters which Allah and His Messenger commanded. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says after that: ﴿And those who take Auliyâ' (protectors, helpers, lords, gods) besides Him (say): "We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allâh."﴾ i.e., they say: We worship them only that they may bring us near to

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Allâh. So Allah (He may be Praised) answered them by saying: ﴾Verily, Allâh will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allâh guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever.﴿ Allah (may He be Praised) explained in this Ayah that the disbelievers do not worship the idols besides Him but to draw them closer to Allah.

This is what the disbelievers believed anciently and recently. Allah refuted this by saying: ﴾Verily, Allâh will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allâh guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever.﴿ So, Allah (He may be Praised) refuted their lie that their gods draw them closer to Allah and showed their disbelief because of worshipping others besides Him. Thus, it is known that for those who have little discernment that the earlier disbelievers' disbelief by assigning the Prophets, pious people, trees, stones and other creatures as intercessors between them and Allah (He may be Praised). They believe that they fulfill their needs without the permission and consent of Allah as ministers intercede with their kings. They compared Him with the kings and leaders saying: as those who need something from a king or a leader intercede to them with their companions and ministers, so we draw near to Allah by His Servants, Prophets and pious people.

This is a mere falsehood because He (He may be Praised) has no parallel, can not be compared with His creatures and no one is able to intercede with Him except by His permission. Intercession can not be granted except to the people of Tawhid. He is All-Able over all things, All-Knowing with everything and He is the Most Merciful who fears no one because He is Supreme over His Servants and the Administrator of their affairs in the way He likes; unlike kings and leaders who are not able over everything and do not know everything. They need ministers, servants and soldiers to help them in matters which they can not do. They also need to be informed of the needs of those whom they do not know because kings and leaders may oppress and get angry without right, so they need people to beg them and seek their pleasure such as ministers and companions. As for the Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He), He is in no need of His servants. He is More Merciful than their own mothers. He is the Just Ruler who puts things in their right scales according to His wisdom, knowledge and ability. So, it is not permissible to match Him with His Creation in any way.

Therefore, Allah (He may be Praised) explained in His Book that the polytheists admit that He is the Creator, the Provider and the Controller. He is the One who answers the one who is compelled by necessity, removes the evil

and gives life, causes death as well as His other actions. The problem between the polytheists and messengers was in showing sincerity in worship to Allah alone as He says: ﴾And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: "Allâh."﴿ And if you ask them who created them, they will surely say: "Allâh." Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "Who provides for you from the sky and the earth? Or who owns hearing and sight? And who brings out the living from the dead and brings out the dead from the living? And who disposes the affairs?" They will say: "Allâh." Say: "Will you not then be afraid of Allâh's punishment (for setting up rivals in worship with Allâh)?"﴿ The Ayahs are numerous in this context and we have mentioned the Ayahs which indicate that the dispute between the messengers and their nations was in showing sincerity in worship to Allah alone as Allah (He may be Praised) says: ﴾And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allâh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Tâghût (all false deities i.e. do not worship Tâghût besides Allâh)."﴿ In addition to similar Ayahs in the same context. Allah explained in many positions in His Book the status of intercession, so

He (He may be Praised) says in Surah Al-Baqarah: ﴾Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission﴿ He (He may be Praised) says in Surah Al-Najm:

﴾And there are many angels in the heavens, whose intercession will avail nothing except after Allâh has given leave for whom He wills and is pleased with.﴿ He says in Surah Al-Anbiya' in the description of the angels: ﴾and they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him.﴿ Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) informed that He does not accept disbelief from His Servants but only gratitude. The meaning of gratitude is to believe in Him and fulfill His Ordinances with full obedience; Allah (He may be Praised) says in Surah Al-Zumar: ﴾If you disbelieve, then verily, Allâh is not in need of you; He likes not disbelief for His slaves. And if you are grateful (by being believers), He is pleased therewith for you.﴿

Al-Bukhari related in his Sahih (book of authentic Hadiths) from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: ﴾O Messenger of Allah! Who is most deserving of your intercession? The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: O Abu Hurairah! It is he who said: There is no god but Allah sincerely from his heart or said: sincerely from his inner self.﴿ It is reported in the Sahih from Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾For every prophet there is a granted supplication. Every prophet hastened in (making) his supplication, but I have reserved my supplication as intercession for my Ummah (nation) on the Day of Resurrection; and it will be attained, if Allah so wills,

by whoever from the Ummah dies, associating nothing with Allah.﴿ The Hadiths are numerous in this context.

All the Ayahs and Hadiths that we mentioned indicate that worship is the sole right of Allah and it is not permissible to direct any act of worship to other than Allah (He may be Praised) such as prophets or others. Intercession is also the sole right of Allah (He may be Praised) as He says: ﴾Say: "To Allâh belongs all intercession."﴿ He does not grant it to anyone except after His Permission to the intercessor and His Consent with the one who deserves intercession and He (He may be Glorified) does not accept but Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah/ monotheism) as previously mentioned. As for polytheists, they have no share of intercession as Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So no intercession of intercessors will be of any use to them.﴿ He (Exalted be He) says: ﴾There will be no friend, nor an intercessor for the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers), who could be given heed to.﴿ When Allah speaks about oppression, it means Shirk as He says: ﴾And it is the disbelievers who are the Zâlimûn (wrong-doers).﴿ Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And (remember) when Luqmân said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allâh. Verily joining others in worship with Allâh is a great Zûlm (wrong) indeed.﴿

As for what you have mentioned in the question that some Sufis say the following Du`a' (inocations) in mosques: (O Allah, invoke peace and blessings on the one whom You made as the reason of revealing Your Mighty Secrets and the eminence of Your Merciful Lights..). The answer is:

These words, and the like, are kinds of exaggeration and overestimation which Prophet Muhammad

(peace be upon him) warned against in the Hadith which is related by Muslim in his Sahih from `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Ruined are those who are harsh in religion, he repeated it thrice.)

Imam Al-Khattaby (may Allah be merciful with him) said: The meaning of "those who are harsh in religion" is: those who go deep in things and exaggerate in searching for it such as theologians who go deep in matters which their minds can not grasp well.

Abu Al-Sa`adat ibn Al-Athir said: They are the people who exaggerate in speech with their throats. The word is taken from the Arabic word "Nat`" which mean the upper part of the mouth then it was used for any speech or action.

From the definitions of those two linguists, it is clear that this form of invoking peace and blessings on the Prophet (peace be upon him) is of this kind that is forbidden. It is permissible for every Muslim to know quite well the form which is related from the Prophet (peace be upon him) regarding invoking peace and blessings upon him which is sufficient. Al-Bukhari and Muslim related in their the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) and the wordings are of Al-Bukhari, from Ka`b ibn `Ujrah (may Allah be pleased with him) (that the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) said: O Messenger of Allah, Allah has ordered us to ask for blessings on you, then how to do that? The Messenger of Allah said: Say, "Allahumma salli `ala Muhammad wa `ala ali Muhammad kama sallaita `ala Ibrahim wa ali Ibrahim innaka Hamidun Majid. Allahumma barek `ala Muhammad wa `ala ali Muhammad kama barakta `ala Ibrahim wa ali Ibrahim innaka Hamidun Majid." (O Allah, Have mercy on Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You had mercy on Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim for You are Praiseworthy and Glorified. O Allah send blessings to Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You sent blessings to Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim for You are Praiseworthy and Glorified.))

It is related in the the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) from Abu Humayd Al-Sa`idy (may Allah be pleased with him). (They

asked: O Messenger of Allah! How should we pray for you? The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Say! O Allah, bless Muhammad, the family of Muhammad, his wives and offspring as You blessed the family of Abraham. Grant favor to Muhammad, his wives and offspring as You granted favor to the family of Abraham in the worlds. Verily You are Praiseworthy and Glorious.) It is reported in Sahih Muslim from Abu Mas`ud Al-Ansary (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: ( Bashir ibn Sa`d said: O Messenger of Allah, Allah has ordered us to ask for blessings on you, then how should we do that? The Messenger of Allah kept silent then said: Say as I taught you, "Allahumma salli `ala Muhammad wa `ala ali Muhammad kama sallaita `ala ali Ibrahim wa barek `ala Muhammad wa `ala ali Muhammad kama barakta `ala ali Ibrahim fil `alameen innaka Hamidun Majid." (O Allah, Have mercy on Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You had mercy on the family of Ibrahim and send blessings to Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as You sent blessings to the family of Ibrahim among humankind for You are Praiseworthy and Glorified) and peace as you know.)

These words, and the like, which were authentically reported from the Prophet (peace be upon him) are what a Muslim should learn and use in invoking peace and blessings

on the Prophet (peace be upon him) because the Messenger (peace be upon him) is most knowledgeable of what is proper to be used in invoking peace and blessings on him. He is the most knowledgeable of the words that should be used in the right of his Lord. As for the exaggerated and innovated words which bear incorrect meanings such as the words you mentioned in your question, they must not be used because of the exaggeration and over-estimation which may be interpreted by incorrect meanings and in the meantime are in contrast to the words which the Prophet (peace be upon him) chose and guided his nation to; he is the most knowledgeable person and the furthest from over-estimation (peace be upon him). I hope that the proofs which we mentioned would explain the reality of Tawhid, the reality of Shirk and the difference between the creed of the earlier polytheists and the late one in this context. I hope I could explain the permissible form of invoking peace and blessings on the Prophet (peace be upon him) properly, as for those who do not want to know the truth, it will be because of following their whims. Allah (May He be Exalted) says: ﴾But if they answer you not (i.e. do not bring the Book nor believe in your doctrine of Islâmic Monotheism), then know that they only follow their own lusts. And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, without guidance from Allâh? Verily Allâh guides not the people who are Zâlimûn (wrong-doers, disobedient to Allâh, and polytheists).﴿

Thus, Allah (Exalted be He) explains in this Ayah that people in regard to what Allah has sent down with the Messenger (peace be upon him) are of two kinds: one that responds to Allah (Exalted be He) and His Messenger and the second are those who follow their whims. Allah informed that no one is straying more than those who follow their whims away from the Ordinances of Allah. We ask Allah for safety and not to follow our whims1 We also ask Him to make us, as well as our Muslim brothers, among those who respond to Allah and His Messenger, who glorify His Shari`ah and who warn people against the Bid`ah (innovation in religion) and whims which violate His Shari`ah for He is the Most Generous! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, Companions those who follow them in piety and righteousness!

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64- Seeking Help from Other than Allah

Q : We have some customs and traditions contradicting our Islamic Shari`ah. These traditions include the following:

On Fridays, people are accustomed to gathering before Jumu`ah prayers asking Allah to confer blessing upon the Prophet at the top of their voices and collectively. They also seek help from the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Allah's Righteous Awliya' (pious people) with the following expressions: "Give us something for Allah's Sake, O Messenger of Allah," "Give us something for Allah's Sake, O Allah's Righteous Awliya' (pious people)," "Give us something for Allah's Sake, O the believing men," "Help us, Help us," "Observe us with care," and the like. Please, guide us, may Allah reward you with what is good!

A: Regarding gathering for sending blessings to the Prophet (peace be upon him) collectively or loudly, this is Bid`ah (innovation in religion). It is ordained for Muslims to send blessings to the Prophet (peace be upon him) without neither raising their voices, which is strange and condemned, nor collectively.

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Everyone should ask Allah to send His blessings upon the Prophet by themself: O Allah, send Your peace and blessings on the Messenger of Allah; O Allah, send Your blessings on Muhammad and the family of Muhammad...etc. One should ask Allah to send His blessings upon the Prophet by oneself. This is because on Fridays it is ordained to frequently ask Allah to send His blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) because this is his (peace be upon him) order: ﴾The most excellent of your days is Friday; so invoke more blessings on me that day, for your blessings will be submitted to me. The people asked: Messenger of Allah, how can it be that our blessings will be submitted to you while your body is decayed? He replied: Allah, the Exalted, has prohibited the earth from consuming the bodies of Prophets.﴿

This stands as proof on the legality of sending peace and blessings on the Prophet frequently on Fridays. It is permissible for us to repeat this frequently in the Masjid and elsewhere but each one should ask Allah to confer peace and blessings upon the Prophet by oneself stating the legislated known prayers, without this being in a loud voice

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distracting the attention of people around them nor with a collective voice where a group of people speak simultaneously. All this is Bid`ah (innovation in religion). Rather, one can ask Allah to confer peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) by oneself, whether at the mosque, in one's way, at home, or at any place. This applies to all other days and places wherein it is ordained to ask Allah to confer peace and blessings upon the Prophet because Allah (may He be Praised) says:

﴾Allâh sends His Salât (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and also His angels (ask Allâh to bless and forgive him). O you who believe! Send your Salât on (ask Allâh to bless) him (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islâmic way of greeting (salutation i.e. As-Salâmu 'Alaikum).﴿ The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: ﴾"If anyone invokes blessings on me once, Allah will bless him ten times."﴿

Asking Allah to confer peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) is ordained for both men and women on Fridays and all other days. Yet this must be done in the way which was observed by the early Muslims i.e. the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and those who followed them rightfully. Everyone should ask Allah to confer peace and blessings upon the Prophet by themself with no need to raise one's voice so that he should not distract the attention of people around them and with no need to gather with a group to say this collectively.

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As for seeking help from the Prophets and others out of the deceased, the absent, Jinn, idols, or other inanimate objects, this comes under major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah). This is an act practiced by the early and late disbelievers. It is obligatory to repent to Allah from it and advise one another to abandon it. It is not permissible for anyone to say, "O men of the Unseen (Rijal Al-Ghaib), give us something for Allah's Sake," "O Allah's Awliya' (pious people), give us something for Allah's Sake," "O Messenger of Allah, give us something for Allah's Sake," or "Help us," "Support us," or "Grant us victory." All this is Munkar (unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law) and major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah). In His Glorious Book, Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾And whoever invokes (or worships), besides Allâh, any other ilâh (god), of whom he has no proof; then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely! Al-Kâfirûn (the disbelievers in Allâh and in the Oneness of Allâh, polytheists, pagans, idolaters) will not be successful.﴿ Allah (may He be Praised) referred to their invoking other than Allah as Kufr (disbelief) and judged them to be unsuccessful. Allah says: ﴾Such is Allâh, your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those, whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, own not even a Qitmîr (the thin membrane over the date-stone).﴿ ﴾If you invoke (or call upon) them, they hear not your call; and if (in case) they were to hear, they could not grant it (your request) to you. And on the Day of Resurrection, they will disown your worshipping them.﴿ Allah referred to their invoking other than Allah as Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah). We should beware of this.

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Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾And the mosques are for Allâh (Alone): so invoke not anyone along with Allâh.﴿ And: ﴾Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).﴿

It is Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) Who is the One to be supplicated. It is He (may He be Exalted and Glorified) Who removes harm and brings benefit. A believer should say: O Lord, cure me! O Lord, help me! O Lord, guide me to the right way! O Lord, amend my heart and work! O Lord, cause me to die as a Muslim! You should supplicate to your Lord with this because Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation).﴿ And: ﴾and ask Allâh of His Bounty﴿ And: ﴾And when My slaves ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My Knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor).﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Supplication (du'a') is itself the worship.﴿

It is ordained for Muslim men and women to supplicate to Allah frequently and to be keen to supplicate and beseech Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) for all that they need.

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To invoke the Prophets, Allah's Awliya' (pious people), or other people by their graves, or at places far away from their graves, all this is Munkar (unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law) and major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) of which we should beware. This applies to what has been mentioned by the inquirer: "O Servants of Allah, O Prophets of Allah, support us, help us," all this is not permissible. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And (remember) when Luqmân said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allâh. Verily joining others in worship with Allâh is a great Zûlm (wrong) indeed.﴿ And: ﴾But if they had joined in worship others with Allâh, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them.﴿ Regarding His Prophet (peace be upon him), Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And indeed it has been revealed to you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), as it was to those (Allâh's Messengers) before you: "If you join others in worship with Allâh, (then) surely (all) your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers."﴿ Thus the matter is significantly grave. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾But if they had joined in worship others with Allâh, all that they used to do would have been of no benefit to them.﴿ It is obligatory to beware of this. It is obligatory for every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) from among the Muslims to worship Allah alone devotedly rather than others. Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.﴿ And:

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﴾You (Alone) we worship, and You (Alone) we ask for help (for each and everything).﴿ You should not ask a Prophet, a Waliy (pious Slave), a tree, a stone, an idol, or other than that for any of your needs, whether for granting you victory, curing a patient, or anything other than that. Rather, ask Allah for all your needs. This is what is meant by worshipping Allah alone and it is the religion of truth i.e. Islam. To direct yourself to asking Allah for your needs and to worship Him alone with your supplication, prayer, fasting, and all your acts of worship is what is meant by "there is no God but Allah" that means that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah. Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾That is because Allâh — He is the Truth (the only True God of all that exists, Who has no partners or rivals with Him), and what they (the polytheists) invoke besides Him, it is Bâtil (falsehood).﴿

Regarding the creatures, even if they are great like Prophets, they are not to be supplicated besides Allah, nor to be asked for help, nor to be vowed for nor to be offered sacrifices. A Muslim must be well-aware of that; every Mukallaf (person meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) must be well-aware of that and know that this is of great importance and that the basis of Islam is to devote worship for Allah alone, which is what is meant by "there is no God but Allah" that means that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah as previously mentioned.

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It is Allah (may He be Praised) Who is the One to be supplicated and asked as Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And your Ilâh (God) is One Ilâh (God - Allâh), Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (there is none who has the right to be worshipped but He), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.﴿ And: ﴾Your Ilâh (God) is only Allâh, (the One) Lâ ilâha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). He has full

knowledge of all things.》 The error in this issue is of significant gravity, where it is not permissible to be lenient in this matter because it is an act of Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) committed in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance and by early polytheists and because it contradicts Islam and contradicts "there is no God but Allah." It is obligatory to beware of these acts of Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah). O inquirer, you should warn, inform, and guide your people to learn matters of the religion, to learn and contemplate the Noble Qur'an, and to observe and put into action the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him) and to attend religious study circles delivered by the scholars known for their knowledge, virtue and sound creed and to listen to the Noble Qur'an Radio Station in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the program of Nur `Ala Al-Darb because this involves useful knowledge and Shar`i answers for the questions presented by listeners. We pray to Allah to guide us all to that which pleases Him.

Regarding asking and seeking help from a person who is alive and present to do physical things that he is able to do, either directly or by sending him a letter or phoning him, there is no harm in this as Allah (may He be Exalted and Glorified) says in the story of Musa (peace be upon him) in Surah Al-Qasas: 《The man of his (own) party asked him for help against his foe》 There is no difference among scholars regarding this matter, praise be to Allah.

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65- Ruling on saying: O so-and-so, give me strength!

Q: Will a person be accused of Kufr (disbelief) when he says, "O so and so, give me strength!" although they do not mean to seek strength from this person? A: Yes, this is the act of the disbelievers of Quraysh who used to say: ﴿These are our intercessors with Allâh.﴾ They did not say: They can benefit or harm us, or it is they who can benefit or harm us. They just said: ﴿These are our intercessors with Allâh.﴾ And: ﴿We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allâh.﴾ They did not say: So that they would benefit or harm us.

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Q: What advice can you give to a knowledge seeker when dealing with those people whom we meet very often?

A: You should advise them and call them to Allah in a gentle manner. Moreover, you should gently explain to them the meanings of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and Tawhid (belief in the Oneness of Allah) in the hope that Allah will guide them.

Q: What if they do not accept the advice?

A: You should abandon them and disavow what they do. However, if you hope for their guidance, keep advising them in the hope that Allah will guide them at your hand. If you observe patience, Allah will reward you with the best.

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66- Issue on beseeching other than Allah for help

Q: Are the Muslims who live in an Islamic country and beseech other than Allah for help excused due to their ignorance? A: As far as we know, they are not excused due to their ignorance of the ruling as they live in a country where scholars and Islamic faculties are available. Why did they not ask so that they would be aware of their religion? They are not excused for these things.

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They should be advised and rebuked by the people in charge. They are to be asked to repent; otherwise, they are to be killed.

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The ruling on saying, "I seek the help of some experts"

Q: Somebody said, "I was entrusted with charitable work and I sought the help of some experts". Does his saying, "I sought the help of some experts" incur any legal blame on him, taking into consideration that he said so meaning that they will give him help in accordance with their capabilities? May Allah reward you well!

A: There is no harm in this saying as long as the one asked for help is alive and able to offer help, even if by correspondence or phone calling. What is forbidden is seeking help from the dead and those with whom there are no tangible means of communication, such as correspondence and phone calling. The same applies to resorting to inanimate things, such as idols, trees and stars; calling them for assistance, since this is an act of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). May Allah grant us success!

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A chapter on warning against excessive adoration of righteous people

68- A question about warning against excess

Q: What is your opinion on Excessive adoration of the Prophet (peace be upon him), where some people say: He is the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Unseen? What is your opinion on such a belief about the Prophet (peace be upon him)? A: The First, the Last, the Most High and the Most Near is Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Allah (Glorified be He) says in Surah Al-Hadid: ﴿He is the First (nothing is before Him) and the Last (nothing is after Him), the Most High (nothing is above Him) and the Most Near (nothing is nearer than Him). And He is the All-Knower of every thing.﴾ Besides, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said in his Du`a' (invocation): ﴿O Allah, You are the First, there is nothing before You, and You are the Last, and there is nothing after You, and You are the Most High and there is nothing above You, and You are Most Near and there is nothing nearer than You. Settle our debts for us and relieve us from want.﴾ Related by Imam Muslim in his Sahih (book of authentic Hadiths.

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So, those who say, "The Prophet (peace be upon him) is the First, the Last, the Most High and the Most Near and that He is All-Knower of everything", are disbelievers because they attach to the Prophet (peace be upon him) four attributes which are solely for Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and none else deserves them. This cannot be said by someone who understands what he says because the First and the Most High is Allah (Glorified be He) and He is before everything and after everything. He is the Most High over all His creatures, the One who subsist after they cease to exist and the One who knows all their conditions. However, the Messenger (peace be upon him) knew only that which Allah taught him. Moreover, He (peace be upon him) passed away, knowing that he was created after he was nothing, and that he was begotten in Makkah by his mother Aminah and his father `Abdullah. After a state of nonexistence, he was created from (semen of) worthless water, just like other humans. Therefore, those who say, "He is the First, the Last, the Most High and the Most Near" are aberrant and apostates, in case they say so while beings Muslims.

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69- Clarification of the fact that none knows Ghayb but Allah (Exalted be He)

Q: A person poses the following question: Undoubtedly, knowledge about the Ghayb (Unseen) is limited to Almighty Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) Alone. There are many Qur'anic Ayahs (verses) affirming this fact. Yet, we find many books that frequently contain the phrase

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"And Allah and His Messenger know best" at the end of statements, sections or pages. What does this mean? Did the Messenger know the Ghayb during his life and still knows it even after his death too? Would you please answer us and provide evidence from the Qur'an, if possible? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: Knowledge about the Ghayb is exclusively confined to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Neither does the Messenger (peace be upon him) nor anyone else know the Ghayb, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿Say: "None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghaib (Unseen) except Allâh"﴾ In Surah Al-`Araf, Allah addresses His Prophet (peace be upon him) saying: ﴿Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "I possess no power over benefit or harm to myself except as Allâh wills. If I had the knowledge of the Ghaib (Unseen), I should have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me. I am but a warner, and a bringer of glad tidings unto people who believe."﴾ and ﴿And with Him are the keys of the Ghaib (all that is hidden), none knows them but He.﴾

Thus, the Ghayb is known by Allah (Exalted be He) Alone, as He knows what has happened, what is already happening, and what has not happened, and how it would be if it had happened.

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He also knows what will happen in the Hereafter, in Paradise, and in Hellfire. He knows who will enter Paradise, who will enter Hellfire; those who will attain salvation and those who will persist in damnation. In a word, He (Exalted be He) knows everything, while the messengers knew only what was revealed to them, as the Almighty (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴿"(He Alone is) the All-Knower of the Ghaib (Unseen), and He reveals to none His Ghaib (Unseen)."﴾ ﴿Except to a Messenger (from mankind) whom He has chosen (He informs him of unseen as much as He likes)﴾

He revealed whatever He liked to the messengers. Similarly, He revealed to our Prophet (peace be upon him) many things, such as the events pertaining to the Hereafter, the Day of Resurrection, Paradise, Hellfire, the emergence of Al-Masih-ul-Dajjal (the Antichrist), the Ka`bah Gog and Magog, and the other events that will occur at the end of time. Allah had revealed these events to His Prophet (peace be upon him) who in turn conveyed them to us. As for the phrase "And Allah and His Messenger know best", which you see in the books written by scholars, it refers to the issues and rulings of Shari`ah which the Prophet (peace be upon him) knew during his lifetime.

With his death, however, he no more knows what happens or what will happen in the world. Yet, the peace and blessings we invoke upon him reach him, as he said: ﴾Invoke blessings on me, for your blessings reach me wherever you may be.﴿ This is a Hadith Sahih (authentic Hadith).

As for people's affairs, events, mistakes, misdeeds and good deeds, they are not known by the Messenger or any other dead people. None is aware of these things except those who witness them or hear from an eye witness or a resident of the same country.

To sum up, none knows the Ghayb except Allah (Exalted be He), and the revelation conveyed to the messengers during their lives is part of the Ghayb. And they in turn informed people of it and taught it to them. It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾A group of people would be driven away from my basin, then I would say: O Lord, My Ummah!﴿ Another wording reads: ﴾My people, my people. It would be said: You don't know what they innovated after you. They turned

apostates since you left them. I will say: Woe to them who change (their religion) after me.﴿

This Hadith indicates that the Prophet (peace be upon him) will not know what people do after his death. Another narration reads: ﴾Some people from my Ummah will be driven away from my basin, so I will say, 'O Lord! These are my people.' It will be said to me, 'You do not know what they brought about after you.' So I will say what `Isa, the son of Mariam, said: ﴾And I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them, but when You took me up, You were the Watcher over them; and You are a Witness to all things. (This is a great admonition and warning to the Christians of the whole world).﴿ ﴿

The Messenger (peace be upon him) knew only what was revealed by Allah to him, as none knows the Ghayb but Allah. Even after his death, he (peace be upon him) will not know what happens to people.

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A chapter in illustration that Du`a' (invocation) of those buried in graves is a major Shirk

70- Supplicating to those buried in graves is a major Shirk

Q: People say that those who visit graves and appeal to those buried therein commit a major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) but are not Mushriks (polytheists), is this right? A: This is not right. For, the visitors of graves who call on dead people for help, instead of supplicating to Allah, commit a major Shirk that was the committed by the disbelievers of Quraysh and other disbelievers, who used to invoke Al-Lat and Al-'Uzza (two idols of the pagan Arabs) and other idols for help. However, those people should be warned against this practice and should be advised to return to Allah in penitence and to renew their faith.

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A chapter on visiting graves

71- The ruling on those who make Tawaf of graves and seek the help of the dead buried therein

Q: A dispute erupted between two groups of people over deeming those who make Tawaf (circumambulation) of the graves and seek the help of those buried therein disbelievers. Some of them say that this is an act of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) and the persons who do so are to be excused for their ignorance about matters of Tawhid (Monotheism).Others, however, claim that those who call on other than Allah for help are non-Muslims and should not be excused for their ignorance, as pardoning people for their ignorance applies only to marginal and juristic issues. The question is, "Which of the two groups are right and which are wrong?" A: The sound opinion is that of group claiming that such persons are not to be excused, since these are essential issues and are among the fundamentals of faith. The Prophet (peace be upon him) preached, even before preaching Salah (Prayer), Sawm (Fasting), Zakah (Obligatory charity) and other fundamentals. For, Muslims are not to be excused due to their ignorance about such fundamentals, especially those who live in Muslim communities and who listen to the Qur'an and the Hadiths. There is no doubt that calling on dead persons, offering vows on their behalf, supplicating to them and entreating them

to cure and succor people are acts of major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah; may He be Glorified and Exalted).

Allah (Exalted be He) says in His Noble Book: (And whoever invokes (or worships), besides Allâh, any other ilâh (god), of whom he has no proof; then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely! Al-Kâfirûn (the disbelievers in Allâh and in the Oneness of Allâh, polytheists, pagans, idolaters) will not be successful.) Thus, Allah calls them Kafirun (disbelievers) due to their practices.

Also, He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (Such is Allâh, your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those, whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, own not even a Qitmîr (the thin membrane over the date-stone).) (If you invoke (or call upon) them, they hear not your call; and if (in case) they were to hear, they could not grant it (your request) to you. And on the Day of Resurrection, they will disown your worshipping them. And none can inform you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) like Him Who is the All-Knower (of everything).) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) considers calling them as Shirk. Moreover, He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (so invoke not anyone along with Allâh.)

and ("And invoke not besides Allâh, any such that will neither profit you nor harm you, but if (in case) you did so, you shall certainly be one of the Zâlimûn (polytheists and wrong-doers).")

Whenever the word "Zâlimûn" is generally mentioned in the Qur'an, it denotes Shirk in accordance with Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) saying: ﴾And (remember) when Luqmân said to his son when he was advising him: "O my son! Join not in worship others with Allâh. Verily joining others in worship with Allâh is a great Zûlm (wrong) indeed.﴿

This applies to making Tawaf of graves with the intention of getting close to the dead, which is the same as calling them for help and it is counted as major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). However, if a person does so thinking that this is an act of worship to Allah and aiming at getting closer to Him, just as people do with the Ka`bah (Kaaba), his act is a Bida`ah (innovated matter in religion) and one of the most dangerous means to Shirk. Yet, most people who circumambulate the graves have the intention of getting closer to the dead through it and seeking reward and intercession from them, which is major Shirk. May Allah safeguard us from this!

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72- A question about visiting graveyards

Q: Dear Shaykh, Common people from among the Sufis attend the celebration of the Prophet's birth, believing that these celebrations constitute (true) Islam, i.e. they think that this is the core of Islam, religion and worship. They thus travel to shrines and graves believing that this is part of the religion. So, what is

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the ruling on this?

A: What do you say regarding the mother of the Prophet (peace be upon him)? Did she have knowledge about the religion? Was the Prophet (peace be upon him) given permission to ask Allah to forgive her or not? Did she embrace Islam or not? She lived in Jahiliyyah (Pre-Islamic era) but she was not excused because she lived at a time in which a remnant of Abraham's religion subsisted. Likewise, the Arabs lived on the remaining (teachings) of the religion of Abraham but they wasted it and that was why they were not excused. Therefore, they were sentenced with Kufr (unbelief), ignorance and disbelief. The Messenger (peace be upon him) was not given permission to seek forgiveness for his mother. And once he (peace be upon him) said to the man who asked him about his father, (Verily my father and your father are in Hell-Fire.) ,

though his father died during Jahiliyyah. How about the people who live in Muslim societies and among Muslim communities! How come they - when admonished to fear Allah and to worship Him - hit or kill those who admonish them, denouncing them as Wahhabys and so on. They do not want to accept the call of Allah. The are indeed misled by the advocates of aberration and

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vicious scholars. It is rather obligatory on them to refer to other than those wicked charlatans. Thus, when the caller to the truth addresses them, they should resort to the Qur'an, in which Almighty Allah (Glorified be He) says, (this Qur'ân has been revealed to me that I may therewith warn you and whomsoever it may reach.)

It is not permissible for them to be slack in this regard. Besides, the callers to the truth should advise and enlighten them, because Allah shall ask them about what they did with their knowledge. He (Exalted be He) says, (And verily this (the Qur'ân) is indeed a Reminder for you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم) and your people (Quraish people, or your followers), and you will be questioned (about it).) May Allah grant us success!

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73- What is the ruling on a Masjid in which there is a grave when it is not known whether the Masjid or the grave was built first

Q: There is a grave inside the Masjid (Mosque) in our district and we do not know which was built first; the Masjid or the grave. Due to lack of money to build another Masjid, we built a wall that separates between them, knowing that the wall lies within the boundaries of the Masjid. So, is

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such a thing permissible? Please advise us, may Allah reward you with the best! A: If the deceased was buried after building the Masjid, the remains should be exhumed and interred in a public cemetery. For, it is not permissible to bury the deceased in Masjids, since the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ﴿Allah cursed the Jews and the Christians; they made the graves of their prophets places of worship.﴾ He (peace be upon him) also said, ﴿"When a pious person among the Jews and the Christians died, they would build a place of worship on his grave, and then would decorate it with those pictures." He then added, "They will be the worst of creatures on the Day of Judgment in the Sight of Allah."﴾ Hence, it is Wajib (obligatory)

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to move the remains to a public cemetery so that the Masjids becomes free from graves. However, if the Masjid was built over the graves, it should be demolished and people should build another Masjid in another place, as the land of Allah is spacious. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) forbade building over, plastering of, and sitting on graves, as this is a means to Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship). He (peace be upon him) said, ﴿Do not offer the Prayer facing graves and do not sit on them.﴾ To sum up, if the Masjid was built over the grave, it should be demolished and be built in another area, away from graves. And if the grave was built in a separate place, it should be dug up and the remains should be transferred to a public cemetery so that it would not be glorified and would not become a source of Fitnah (temptation). We ask Allah to grant us safety and to guide all Muslims!

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Chapter on Taswir

74- Ruling on photography

Q: What is your view concerning the claim that taking photographs of humans is permissible, while drawing pictures is Haram (prohibited)? What is your advice for Muslim women who issue Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) without knowledge?

A: Taswir (painting, drawing, sculpture, and photography) is not permissible whether by hand or not. All kinds of Taswir are rejected. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) cursed the Musawwir (one who makes pictures and statues, or photographs of living beings). He (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The people who will be most severely punished on the Day of Resurrection will be the Musawwirs.﴿ And: ﴾Every Musawwir will be in Hellfire.﴿ The Musawwir is to be punished in Hellfire for each picture they take for themselves.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a thick curtain having pictures on it that belongs to `Aishah, he took hold of it and tore it saying: ﴾The makers of these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, 'Give life to what you have created (i.e., these pictures).'﴿ Every Muslim should avoid Taswir. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed the consumer of Riba (usury), the one who pays it, the Musawwir, she who tattoos and she who gets tattooed. One should beware of all this, of consuming Riba, of tattoos and of depicting beings with souls such as pigeons, chickens, animals, humans, birds, etc. It is not permissible to depict any beings with souls neither on papers, nor on clothes nor on wood.

Every man and woman should beware of issuing Fatwa without knowledge. They should fear Allah; they should not talk about Allah without knowledge. Every Muslim should beware of this, for issuing Fatwa without knowledge is a very dangerous matter which every Muslim should avoid and ask for Allah's Forgiveness for what they have committed in the past.

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75- A question concerning Taswir

Q: Is it permissible for a teacher to draw animate beings in the course of teaching as a visual aid, bearing in mind that many Sahih (authentic) Hadiths prohibit Taswir (painting, drawing, sculpture, and photography) of animate objects?

A: It is not permissible for a teacher or any other person to depict pictures of animate beings, because the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed the Musawwir (one who makes pictures and statues, or photographs of living beings) and said that they are among the people most tormented on the Day of Resurrection. They are to be punished and demanded to bring life to what they had created. Educational illustration can be achieved without Taswir. Allah (Glorified be He) does not make the Ummah (nation based on one creed) in want of anything prohibited, with regard to education. There are so many lawful means of illustration that are instrumental and sufficient for whoever fears Allah. May Allah guide us and all the Muslims to comprehend His Religion and hold fast to it, and save us from the misleading temptation, for He is the All-Hearer and the Ever-Near. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you)!

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76- The ruling on keeping pictures

Q: What is the ruling on personal photos one has? A: These photos should be disposed of if they are no longer needed. As for the Hadith: "Except a design on a cloth," it is reported in the Hadith indicating that angels do not enter a house in which there is a picture. Here "a design on a cloth," is interpreted as referring to cushions or mats, but this does not include what is hanged on walls, since the Prophet (peace be upon him) disapproved of `Aishah's hanging a cloth including pictures.

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77- The ruling on putting pictures in homes

Q: We know that hanging pictures in homes is Haram (prohibited). Can we hang them in the bathroom, whether they are tridimensional or not?

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A: It is obligatory to remove these pictures. You should not keep them either in the bathroom or anywhere else at home, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him): (Spare no portrait unwiped out, and leave not a high grave unleveled.)

Yet, if it is necessary to keep the photos due to plausible reasons, then one should keep them within a box and the like, and should not hang or put them either in the bathroom or anywhere else. May Allah grant us success!

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78- The ruling on keeping useful magazines that contain pictures

Q: What is the ruling on bringing home useful magazines and school books that contain pictures of living creatures? Does this come under the ruling introduced in the Hadith that reads: (Angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or a picture.) **? A:** You should wipe out the head (in the pictured) , and then there would be no objection to it. May Allah grant us success!

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79. The ruling on Taswir of an inanimate objects

Q: If Taswir (painting, drawing, sculpture, and photography) of inanimate objects is lawful from the Shar`y perspective, is it permissible to continue doing so?

A: Yes, this is permissible according to the Fatwa issued by the interpreter of the Qur'an and the knowledgeable scholar of the Ummah (nation), `Abdullah ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father). This is further maintained by the Hadith related by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that we have mentioned in the answer concerning the ruling on Taswir. In this Hadith, Jibril (Gabriel) ordered the Prophet (peace be upon him) to cut off the statue's head so that it could take the shape of a tree. This signifies that it is permissible to practice Taswir of trees and suchlike. Praise be to Allah that scholars have unanimously agreed to this. Yet, if one can find another job that is fully good and permissible, then this is better than this job which may lead a person to make Taswir of animate objects. Shari`ah requires that one should keep away from the means leading to evil. May Allah protect us and you from the means incurring Allah's Wrath.

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80. The ruling on caricatures

Q: What is the ruling on caricatures in newspapers and magazines that include drawings of persons?

A: A: The referred to drawing is not permissible. It is one of the widely common prohibited matters that should be abandoned due to the categorical purport of the Sahih (authentic) Hadiths establishing the prohibition of picturing animate objects, whether through photographing, drawing or anything else.

Among these Hadiths is that reported by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih (Book of authentic Hadiths) on the authority of Abu Juhayfah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: (The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade (earning) the price of a dog and the price of blood, and the (earnings of) woman who tattoos and (charge paid by a woman who) is tattooed, and the consumer (taker) of Riba (usury) and its giver, and cursed the image-maker.) Also, it is reported in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The people most tortured on the Day of Resurrection would be the image-makers.) He (peace be upon him) also said:

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(those who make such pictures would be punished on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to them: Breathe life into what you have created.) There are many other authentic Hadiths establishing this ruling, with exception only in case of necessity. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (while He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity)

I implore to Allah to help Muslims adhere to the Shari`ah (Law) of their Lord and the Sunnah of their Prophet (peace be upon him) and keep away from what disagrees with them. He is the Best One to be asked.

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A chapter on issues related to witchcraft

81- Witchcraft intended to separate between husbands and wives and how to undo its effect

Q: Dear Shaykh, I hope that you supplicate to Allah for me and my wife because both of us have been subjected to sorcery that caused me to hate her and refuse to have sexual intercourse with her, whereas if she is away, I miss her so much. May Allah protect you from every evil and bless you!

A: May Allah cure you and all Muslims! I recommend you to recite Surah Al-Fatihah, Ayat-ul-Kursy (the Qur'anic Verse of Allah's Chair, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255) and Al-Mu`awwidhatayn (Surahs Al-Falaq and Al-Nas) on water and breathe in the water while reciting, knowing that it is better to add to the water seven milled leaves of Sidr (lote tree/ lotus jujube), and then take a bath using this water. For, this will be helpful in removing the magic effect. It suffices to recite these Surahs on the water without applying Sidr leaves, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to (blow into his hands and) recite Surah Al-Ikhlas and and Al-Mu`awwidhatayn three times and then wipe his hands over his face, chest

and head. Then, the pain will be removed, in sha'a-Allah. You should do so when going to sleep; recite Ayat-ul-Kursy, Al-Iklas and Al-Mu`awwidhatayn three times, blowing into one's hands, and then wipe one's hand over the head and face three times, and then the pain will be removed, in sha'a-Allah. It is permissible to recite this on some water and wash your body with it. It is also recommendable to add seven leaves of Sidr to the water, as some Salaf (righteous predecessors) used to do, and recite Ayat-ul-Kursy, Al-Iklas and Al-Mu`awwidhatayn and some Ayahs (verses from the Qur'an) on removing the magic effect, from Surah Al-A`raf, Surah Yunus and Surah Ta-Ha, on the water by yourself or by aid of anyone else and this will be helpful, in sha'a Allah.

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82- A question about sorcery

Dear respected Shaykh, `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, may Allah protect you.

As-salamu `Alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!).

Dear Shaykh, I am a young man from outside the Kingdom. Sorcery is widespread in my country, where sorcerers and conjurers practise some kind of sorcery which is called "Al-Ta'kid wa Al-Ta`qid", i.e.

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Consulting magicians, Treating magic with magic

Protection from magic as mentioned in the Book and Sunnah

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

`Abdul `Aziz bin `Abdullah ibn Baz

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83- The ruling on using superstition to find lost objects

Q: Is it permissible when someone loses something or a person is killed to go to Al-Mulawwith or Al-Mulahhis who asks the accused to lick a heated metal bar, claiming that tongue of a lying person will be burnt while that of a truthful person will not. Is it permissible to use this method to detect criminals compared to the use police dogs to identify criminals?

A: Undoubtedly, this act is Batil (null and void) and Munkar (unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). It is a way to burn the tongues and cause harm to Muslims. It has no basis in Shari`ah (Islamic Law) as far as we know. Rather, it is superstitious and an act of charlatans who want to consume people's wealth unlawfully. It is thus prohibited, and is in no way comparable to the use of police dogs.

If a person loses something, they may follow the tracking methods used by the Arabs and approved by the Shari`ah to find lost objects, runaway slaves or the like.

As for murders in which criminals are unknown, an investigation should be run to identify them, asking those having information about the related crimes, those surrounding the crime scenes and so on and so forth.

As for the use of heated bars that are applied to the tongues of suspects, such method is not permissible because it is invalid and baseless. It is never analogous to the use of police dogs, because dogs have the powerful identify criminals through smell.

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Chapter on (believing in) bad omens

84- Explanation of the Hadith that reads: There is no `Adwa (no contagious disease is transmitted without Allah's Permission), nor is there any bad omen (from birds) ...

Q: I heard a Hadith about pessimism. It reads what means: "There is no Hamah, nor is there any Safar...". Would you please tell us this Hadith in full and explain it?

A: It was authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾There is no `Adwa (no contagious disease is conveyed without Allah's Permission), nor is there any bad omen (from birds), nor is there any Hamah i.e., an owl that the Arabs used to see as a bad omen, nor is there any bad omen in the month of Safar, nor is there any Naw' (a star), or Ghul (kinds of Jinn), but I am pleased with good omens.﴿ This Hadith invalidates the pre-Islamic customs of believing that the diseases are contagious by nature. The Prophet (peace be upon him) showed that this is false and that Allah Alone manages the universe. ﴾Then, an attendant Bedouin stood up and said: "Then what about my camels? They are like deer on the sand, but when a mangy camel comes and mixes with them, they all get infected with mange!"

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Thereupon, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Then who conveyed the (mange) disease to the first one!"﴿ In other words, the One (Allah) Who afflicted the first camel with mange is He Who afflicted other healthy camels with it (and not the mangy camel itself). Then, the Prophet (peace be upon him) explained to them that mixture of sick and healthy is one reason behind the transmission of the disease with Allah's Permission. That was why he (peace be upon him) said: ﴾The cattle (sheep, cows, camels, etc.) suffering from a disease should not be mixed up with healthy cattle.﴿ This indicates forbiddance to mix sick camels or the like with the healthy ones (as a precaution), since such mixture may lead to transmission of the disease from sick to healthy ones, (only) with Allah's Permission. Similarly, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾One should run away from the leper as one runs away from a lion.﴿ This should be taken as a precautionary measure to avoid spread of contagious diseases. It was authentically reported that it is not inevitable that the leper infects the healthy, but it happens only if Allah wills it.

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The Hadithes mentioned in this chapter affirm that no contagious disease is conveyed without Allah's Permission. The belief that diseases themselves infect people by nature is false. Indeed, if Allah wills otherwise, the sick will never infect the healthy.

Yet, Muslims are ordained to adopt the useful means and shun the ones which may entail evil

consequences.

Here is an explanation for the difficult words stated in Hadith. The phrase "nor is there any bad omen" means invalidating the belief previously adopted in the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance) of drawing bad omen from certain things (seen or heard) that they disliked and the seeing or hearing of which may cause them not to fulfill plans. The Prophet (peace be upon him) thus declared the invalidity of such practice in the other Hadith that reads: ﴾Drawing evil omens is Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship); drawing evil omens is Shirk.﴿ He (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾If any of you sees anything they dislike, they should say: O Allah, no one brings good things except You, and no one averts evil things except You, and there is no might and power but with You.﴿

It was also reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Whoever lets a bad omen stop them from doing something are guilty of Shirk. They said: What is the Kaffarah (expiation) for that? He said: To say: Allahumma la khayra illa khayruka wa la tayra illa tayruka wa la ilaha ghayruka (O Allah, there is no good but Yours, no birds but Yours [that You have created],

and there is no deity but You).﴿

As for Hamah, it is the owl, which people of Jahiliyyah claimed that if it shouts over a house, the inhabitants of that house would die. The Prophet (peace be upon him) thus invalidated such a belief.

As for his saying "nor is there any Safar", it refers to the known month of Safar. People used to regard the approach of this month as a bad omen. Invalidating this practice, the Prophet (peace be upon him) explained that Safar is just like any other month and we must not be pessimistic about it. Some scholars, however, stated that it means a sort of organism that lives in the (human) stomach and that is called Safar. They believed it to be contagious.

As regards Naw' (pl. Anwa'), it refers to the stars. Some people used to believe that seeing some stars is a bad omen. The Prophet (peace be upon him), therefore, invalidated such a belief.

In the Noble Qur'an, Allah (Exalted be He) has shown that stars are created to adorn the heavens, drive away the devils and guide man on land

and in the sea. Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And indeed We have adorned the nearest heaven with lamps, and We have made such lamps (as) missiles to drive away the Shayâtîn (devils).﴿ and: ﴾It is He Who has set the stars for you, so that you may guide your course with their help through the darkness of the land and the sea.﴿ He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And landmarks (signposts during the day) and by the stars (during the night), they (mankind) guide themselves.﴿

Concerning the word Ghul, it means a kind of Jinn that appears in the desert to mislead and scare people. Some people of Jahiliyyah used to believe in this kind of Jinn and in its having a supernatural power. Therefore, Allah nullified this belief. It was reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾When the Jinn tries to mislead you (by taking different shapes), hasten to pronounce Adhan (call to Prayer).﴿ This indicates that mentioning Allah's Name drives the Jinn away. Together with adopting the concrete means that protect from every evil, taking refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil of what He has created wards off its evil and all other forms of evil.

With regard to drawing good omens, it implies feeling pleased upon hearing a good word, with no reluctance to fulfill one's needs. Concerning this matter, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾...but the good omen pleases me.

They said: "What is good omen?" He said: "A good word.") End of Quote

For example, when a sick person hears someone saying "O healthy and cured one", he feels happy. Likewise, when someone seeking something hears someone else saying "O one that finds (things), O successful or O guided person", he feels optimistic and happy.

May Allah grant us all success.

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85- Pessimism about Safar is a characteristic of Jahiliyyah

Q: It is known that many people are pessimistic about the month of Safar regarding many affairs. Such people, for example, do not conclude marriage contracts during Safar. Moreover, many people believe that it is not permissible to break a stick, knot ropes, or entwine fingers when concluding a marriage contract for this leads to failure of the concerned marriage and disharmony between the spouses.

Since all the foregoing are beliefs bearing on 'Aqidah (creed), could you please advise and clarify the ruling on it? May Allah guide us all to all that He loves and is pleased with.

A: Pessimism about Safar is not permissible. It is a characteristic of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance).

Safar - just like all other months - does not bring good or evil, as good is only from Allah (Glorified be He) and evil is predestined by Him. Moreover, it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) annulled the concept of pessimism when he said: ﴾There is no 'Adwa (contagion, disease transmission naturally by itself not by the Decree of Allah), nor is there any Tiyarah (evil omen), nor is there any Hamah (pre-Islamic superstitious belief that the bones of a dead person turn into an owl), nor is there Safar (the month of Safar was believed to bring bad luck during Jahiliyyah).﴿ (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

The same applies to pessimism about entwining fingers, breaking a stick, etc., when concluding a marriage contract. Such beliefs are false, baseless, and thus they should not be adopted by a Muslim. May Allah grant us all success!

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86- The ruling on pessimism about a person's house

Dear respected Shaykh `Abdul `Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

A woman from the southern region, who had seven children, moved to live in a new house and then two of her children died; a son then a daughter. She then saw in a dream that if she remains in the same house, all her children will die.

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Your Eminence, I hope that you enlighten us on that issue, knowing that the other five children; sons and daughters, of that woman are, however, still alive. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

A: Wa `alaykum as-salam warahmatullah wabarakatuh

If what you mentioned is real, then such a woman have the right to choose between remaining in that house or moving to another one. For, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ❨ Evil omen could be in three things: a house, a (wicked) wife, and a riding animal. ❩ May Allah grant us all success! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

Mufty of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

`Abdul `Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

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Chapter on astrology

87- The ruling on believing that rainfall is caused by stars

Q: When people living in the desert see a specific star appearing at the time of rain, they regard such a star as the reason for rain. What is the ruling on this? May Allah safeguard you!

A: Such a belief is baseless. Rather, it is not permissible and is considered Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). A proof for this is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) narrated that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) said: ﴾Whoever says that the rain is due to the Blessings and the Mercy of Allah believes in Me and disbelieves in the stars, and whoever says that it rains because of a particular star does not believe in Me but believes in that star.﴿ Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim, being reported on

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the authority of Zayd ibn Khalid Al-Juhany (may Allah be pleased with him).

Moreover, it is related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) Book of Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾My Ummah (nation based on one creed) will not abandon four characteristics of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance): boasting of high rank, reviling other peoples' genealogies, seeking rain by stars, and wailing (over the deceased).﴿ He (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾If the wailing woman does not repent before she dies, she will be made to stand on the Day of Resurrection wearing a garment of tar and a chemise of mange.﴿ There are many other Hadiths that denounce the practices of Jahilliyyah and warn against them. May Allah grant us success!

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Chapter on cursing Dahr

88- The ruling on cursing Dahr

Q: While a pregnant woman was going to Muzdalifah, she bled, started to vomit, and consequently she said: "May Allah not repeat this day again." What is the ruling on such a saying?

A: The concerned woman has to make Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah). This is because such a saying is not permissible and considered Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect). When a person faces any difficulty, they have to say: "O Allah! I ask You to protect me," "O Allah! Cure me," and "O Allah! Grant me safety." On the other hand, cursing day, night, or a place whether in Mina, Muzdalifah, or any other place is a type of Munkar.

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Chapter on issues pertaining to Tawassul

89- Tawassul through Allah's Names and Attributes

Q: What is the criterion of making Tawassul (supplicating to Allah in the name of .../by virtue of the status of...) to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He)?

A: Tawassul through Allah's Names and Attributes is lawful and it is one means of ensuring the answer of Du`a' (supplication), as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allâh, so call on Him by them) Tawassul through Allah's Names and Attributes is also affirmed in many Hadiths.

Besides, the person is prescribed to beseech Allah through their Iman (Faith) in and love for Allah and through other good deeds. Among these deeds, through which they make Tawssul, are love for Allah's prophets and messengers and believing Servants. Dutifulness to one's parents, chastity and fulfillment of an Amanah (trust) can be utilized in making Tawssul. This is in line with the Sahih Hadith on the story of three men who entered a cave

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and then a rock fell and blocked their way out. They asked Allah to save them by virtue of their best deeds. One of them made Tawassul through his filial dutifulness towards his parents, the second made it through his chastity while he was able to commit Zina and the third made it through having fulfilled an Amanah (trust). May Allah grant us success!

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90- A question on Tawassul

Q: What is the ruling on making Tawassul (supplicating to Allah) through invoking peace and blessings of Allah on the Prophet (peace be upon him)?

A: It is ordained that a person praises Allah and invokes peace and blessings upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) while making Du`a' (supplication). Doing so is in fact one reason for the Du`a' to be answered, for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿If any of you makes Du`a', they should praise their Lord in the beginning, then invoke blessings on the Prophet (peace be upon him), and thereafter make Du`a' to Allah for anything they wish.﴾ .

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Chapter on the ruling on mocking and degrading Din

91- The ruling on mocking and degrading Din

Q: Is mocking Din (religion) by sneering at letting the beard grow or shortening the garment considered a type of Kufr (disbelief)?

A: If such a person's intention is to ridicule Din, then doing so is Riddah (apostasy), as Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾Say: "Was it at Allâh (عز وجل), and His Ayât (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations) and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that you were mocking?" Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed.﴿

However, if the concerned person makes fun of another because of his beard or short clothes, meaning that the latter is rigorous as far as the beard and clothes are concerned but negligent of other religious matters or does so for any other reasons; this is not Riddah.

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Again, if a person's intention is to ridicule and degrade Din, this is tantamount to Riddah. May Allah protect us!

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92- A question on making fun of Din

Q: What is the ruling on whoever claims that they say so (words that mock people adhering to some religious practices) as a sort of joking and jesting?

A: Doing so is not permissible. It is Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and a dangerous sin. Moreover, whoever says so while intending to make fun of Din is a Kafir (disbeliever).

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Chapter on swearing oaths by other than Allah

93- Swearing by other than Allah takes the Muslim out of Islam

Q: Could you please clarify for us the types of Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship)? Besides, is swearing by anyone or anything other than Allah considered Shirk that takes a person out of the fold of Islam?

A: There are two types of Shirk; major and minor. Major Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship that takes the Muslim out of Islam) is to offer all or some `Ibadah (worship) to anyone other than Allah such as making Du`a' (supplication) to the deceased, seeking their help, and vowing to them or to Jinn (creatures created from fire) or to angels as Quraysh and other Arabs used to do to their idols. Major Shirk also comprises denying anything that is Ma`lum minad-din biddarurah (necessarily known Islamic principles) be it obligatory or prohibited such as saying that it is not obligatory on Mukallafs (those meeting the conditions to be held legally accountable for their actions) to perform Salah (Prayer), that Zakah (obligatory charity) is not obligatory on rich Muslims, or that

observing Sawm (Fast) in Ramadan is not obligatory on Mukallafs. Similarly, it is major Shirk that a person considers Halal (lawful) something that Allah clearly declares Haram (prohibited) such as saying that Zina (sexual intercourse outside marriage), consuming Khamr (intoxicants), undutifulness to parents, or sorcery is Halal. The general rule is thus whoever offers all or some of their `Ibadah to anyone other than Allah whether idols, deceased people, etc., or denies something amongst the (Ma`lum minad-din biddarurah) be it an obligation or a prohibition indulges in major Shirk. The same applies to whoever commits something that contradicts Islam.

On the other hand, there are different types of minor Shirk (associating other partners with Allah that is not tantamount to taking the Muslim out of Islam) as well such as swearing oaths by anything other than Allah including the Prophet (peace be upon him), the trust, so and so person's head, etc. Proof of this is that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (anyone who swears by anything other than Allah commits an act of Shirk.) Another kind of minor Shirk is Riya' (showing-off) such as reciting (Qur'an) for Riya',

giving Sadaqah (voluntary charity) for Riya' etc., for the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (The most dreadful thing I fear for my Ummah (nation based on one creed) is minor Shirk. When he was asked about minor Shirk, he (peace be upon him) said: Riya'.) Another form of minor Shirk is that a person says: "What Allah wills and so and so wills" or "except for Allah and so and so" or "This is

from Allah and so and so." Proof of this is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Do not say, 'What Allah wills and so and so wills,' but say: 'What Allah wills and afterwards so and so wills.') and when (... a man said to the Prophet (peace be upon him): 'What Allah and you will,' the Prophet said to him, 'Do you make me a rival to Allah? Say instead, 'What Allah Alone wills.')

It is worth mentioning that minor Shirk may be turned into major Shirk if a person who indulges in it believes that whoever is sworn by other than Allah or referred to in saying "What Allah wills and so and so wills" monitors the universe, has a will that is not subject to the Will of Allah, is able to benefit or harm other than Allah, or

may be worshipped or asked for help other than Allah.

However, if swearing oaths by anyone other than Allah is not accompanied by any of the foregoing beliefs but is done only out of extolling whomever is sworn by because of their being a prophet, a righteous person, a person's parent, etc., it is only minor but not major Shirk.

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Chapter on the Predestination and Divine Decree (Al-Qada' and Al-Qadar)

94- The ruling on engaging in a false conversation about the Divine Decree

Q: Many people engage in false conversations about Predestination and Divine Decree. Do you have any instructions in this regard?

A: This issue was meddled with by early people who committed many mistakes in this regard. One should beware of this issue. Every believing man and woman should submit to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and believe in His Divine Decree, be keen to adopt the good beneficial means and keep away from the bad harmful means. It is also for that reason that Allah taught and enabled His Servants to do so and also bestowed on them of reasoning and capacity that help them worship Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) and abandon sins.

It is obligatory not to meddle with this issue and to believe that Allah has encompassed, reckoned and predestined all things; that what Allah wills comes to pass and what He does not will does not come to pass; that Allah is the Most Great Creator, Who is All-Omnipotent; that all that exists

is created and predestined by Him (Glorified and Exalted be He) and that He has given man intellect and the means and power to do either good or evil. As one can eat and drink, wear clothes, get married, travel and reside, sleep and wake up, etc., one can also either obey or disobey.

It is feared that those meddling with Predestination and Divine Decree may either draw on it as a proof that man does not have free will or deny it. Meddling with it, some people denied that there is Predestination or Divine Decree, such as Al-Qadariyyah - who denied Predestination and claimed that they create their actions and that Allah has neither guided them to do good deeds nor predestined that they would commit sins. Other people claimed: Nay, Allah has granted His Servants guidance to doing good deeds but He did not predestine that they would commit sins. Thus they were trapped into falsehood. Meddling with Predestination and Divine Decree, another group claimed: We are compelled to do what we do, i.e. they cannot be held responsible either for their obedience or disobedience because they are compelled and are deprived of any power. Thus, they went astray and misled others. We implore Allah to grant us safety.

The Magi of the Muslim Ummah are Al-Qadariyyah who denied Predestination and went astray in this regard, saying that matters are not known to Allah before their occurrence. They thus followed the Magi who stated that man has two gods: the god of light and the god of darkness. They also claimed that the god of light created good, whereas the god of darkness created evil. They were also imitated in such belief by Al-Qadariyyah, who denied Predestination and associated others with Allah in what He does, through claiming that they create their actions. We implore Allah to grant us safety.

It is obligatory for every Muslim to believe in Predestination and Divine Decree and to eschew meddling with this issue without knowledge as was done by those who innovated matters in religion, and thus strayed and misled others. Rather, it is obligatory for every Muslim to believe in Predestination and Divine Decree, to submit to Allah in this regard, to know that Allah has predestined all things, knew and reckoned them and that the humans have willpower, wish and choice, though they cannot do other than that which Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has predestined.

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95- A Question on Divine Decree

Q: Many a time we read essays in books and magazines mentioning expressions such as "Twist of Fate," "foolishness of fate," or "Fate so willed." Are these expressions correct? What advice can you give to those using such expressions in their writings? May Allah reward you with what is good!

A: In the Name of Allah and praise be to Him. Regarding one's saying: "It is an irony of fate" or "foolishness of fate," this is an ill word. It is even considered Kufr (disbelief), aberration and ridicule of Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) Divine Decree. As for the expressions uttered by some people: "Fate so willed," or

"Allah's Will decreed" or "providence so willed," this is not permissible. These expressions are wrong, and the correct is to say "Allah (may He be Praised) so willed" or "Our Lord (may He be Praised) so willed," and the like of expressions attributing will to Allah and not to His Attributes.

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96- The ruling on the expression "Allah forbid!"

Q : Sister M. S. M., from Al-Ras, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, asks, What is the Shar`y (legal) ruling on uttering expressions such as, "God forbid!" or "May Allah forbid such-and-such a thing!" Please advise, may Allah reward you with what is good!

A: As far as I know, there is no harm in that. May Allah grant us success!

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Chapter on respecting the Names of Allah (Exalted be He) and changing a person's name if it contradicts Islam

97- The ruling on names having the meaning worshipping other than Allah

From `Abdul `Aziz bin `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother, the Director of Passport and Nationality Department in Rabegh, may Allah guide you to all goodness. Amen!

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

I was visited by a person called `Abdullah bin `Abdul-Jazy, who asked me whether it is permissible for a person to be called `Abdul-Jazy? It is worth mentioning that the Passport and Nationality Department in Rabegh suspended the renewal of his ID to know the Islamic ruling on his father's name first.

A: Scholars have unanimously agreed that it is not permissible to use names with the meaning of worshipping anything other than Allah (Glorified be He). So, it is not permissible to say `Abdul-Naby, `Abdul-Husayn, or

`Abdul-Ka`bah or the like, as all the people are Servants of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). Besides, it is known that Al-Jazy is not one of Allah's Names. So it is not permissible to use it and it must be changed to another name having the meaning of worshipping none but Allah (Glorified be He). Or it can be changed to a name such as Ahmad, Muhammad, Ibrahim or the like. When changing the name, he must to point out in the ID the first name with the new one so that the established under the first name would not be lost. This is what I know of the Pure Islamic law. The concerned person, `Abdullah, told me that his father agreed to change his name from `Abdul-Jazy to `Abdul-Rahman, and so this approval is to be authorized. May Allah guide us all to what pleases Him! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

Vice-President of the Islamic University in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah

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98- Changing names that imply contradiction to Shari`ah

Q: If a person's names is found to be contradicting Shari`ah (Islamic Law), what should they do, in your point of view?

A: It is obligatory to change names like `Abdul-Hussayn, `Abdul-Naby or `Abdul-Ka`bah for these designations imply worshipping things other than Allah and this is not allowable. Worship is only allowable to Allah Alone. It is thus better to use names that coincide with this, such as `Abdullah, `Abdul-Rahman, `Abdul-Malik, etc.

Besides, names such as `Abdul-Nabi or `Abdul-Ka`bah should be changed to other allowed names, like `Abdullah, `Abdul-Rahaman, Muhammad, Ahmad, Salih or similar allowable names. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) changed the names of many persons that contradicted to Shari`ah.

If, however, it is the father's name that is contradictory to Shari`ah, then such a father should be informed of the ruling so that he change his name if he be alive. But if he is dead, then there will be no need to change it as the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) did not change the name of `Abdul-Muttalib or other names having the meaning of worshipping other than Allah, such as `Abd-Manaf, as they were known by these names.

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Chapter on Allah's Names and Attributes

99- The servant's denunciation of the insinuations about Allah's Being is pure faith

From `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to our brother, may Allah increase your knowledge and faith and bless you wherever you may be. Amen

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you.)

I received your letter dated 27/1/1395 A.H. which includes a question asked by your colleagues. You mentioned that one of your colleagues has some doubts. Though he acknowledges that Allah (Glorified be He) is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the `Arsh (Allah's Throne), the Kursy (Allah's Chair) and everything, he wonders who created Allah (Exalted be He). You answered him that the first part of his speech is correct and there is no comment on it. However, the second part about who created Allah, should not be asked by a Muslim. He should follow the example of the knowledgeable Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) who never asked such a question. You also added that Allah (Glorified be He) says about himself, ﴾There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.﴿

and ﴾He is the First (nothing is before Him) and the Last (nothing is after Him), the Most High (nothing is above Him) and the Most Near (nothing is nearer than Him). And He is the All-Knower of every thing.﴿ It is clear that you wanted clear away his doubt.

My answer is as follows: You should know - may Allah grant us success in understanding His Religion and holding fast to it - that the devils among mankind and jinn throw Muslims into doubt with regard to the truth, to bring them out from light into darkness and let Kafirs (disbelievers) hold fast to their false beliefs. It is already decreed through the Knowledge and Predestination of Allah (Exalted be He) that this world is an abode of trials and conflicts between truth and falsehood, so that the seeker of guidance will be manifest and the truthful will be distinct from the liar and so will the Mu'min (believer) from the Kafir (unbeliever). Allah (Glorified be He) says, ﴾Alif-Lâm-Mîm. Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested?﴿ and ﴾And surely, We shall try you till We test those who strive hard (for the Cause of Allâh) and As-Sâbirûn (the patient), and We shall test your facts (i.e. the one who is a liar, and the one who is truthful).﴿

He (Exalted be He) also says: ﴾And certainly, the Shayâtîn (devils) do inspire their friends (from mankind) to dispute with you, and if you obey them [by making Al-Maitah (a dead animal) legal by eating it], then you would indeed be Mushrikûn (polytheists); [because they (devils and their friends) made lawful to you to eat that which Allâh has made unlawful to eat and you obeyed them by considering it lawful to eat, and by doing so you worshipped them; and to worship others besides Allâh is polytheism].﴿ and ﴾And so We have appointed for every Prophet enemies - Shayâtîn (devils) among mankind and jinn, inspiring one another with adorned speech as a delusion (or by way of deception). If your Lord had so willed, they would not have done it; so leave them alone with their fabrications. (Tafsîr Qurtubi)﴿ ﴾(And this is in order) that the hearts of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter may incline to such (deceit), and that they may remain pleased with it, and that they may commit what they are committing (all kinds of sins and evil deeds).﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) makes it clear in the first, second and third Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) that He tries the believers to ascertain their truthfulness. He (Glorified be He) asserts that He does so to make known those who are truthful, and those who are liars. This trial includes wealth, poverty, sickness, health, encounters with enemies and the different kinds of trials involving doubts that are thrown by the devils among mankind and jinn. As a result of such trials, those true to their faith will be distinct from those who are liars. Allah (Exalted be He) knows all this in advance through His eternal and absolute Knowledge before its experiential realization. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾that you may know that Allâh has power over all things, and that Allâh surrounds all things in (His) Knowledge.﴿

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Besides, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾Allah had ordained the measures (of quality) of the creation fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth, as His Throne was upon water.﴿ Related by Muslim in his Sahih

However, Allah (Exalted be He) will not punish people according due to His prior Knowledge, but He will punish and reward them for what they already do. In the fourth, fifth and sixth Ayahs, He (Glorified be He) mentions that the devils sow seeds of doubt in the hearts of their fellows and inspire them with adorned speech to dispute with the followers of truth and overwhelm them with confusion concerning Islam. As a result, the hearts of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter may incline to such deceit, and they may remain pleased with it. As such, they may spread and mix truth with falsehood to throw people into doubt with regard to the truth and divert them from guidance. Verily, Allah (Exalted be He) is not unaware of what they do. Nevertheless, out of His Mercy, Allah has assigned for those devils and their intimate companions those who would uncover their falsehood and dispel their doubts by means of conclusive arguments and decisive proofs. Hence, they establish conclusive argument.

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Allah (Glorified be He) has sent down His Book as an exposition of everything. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allâh as Muslims).﴿ and ﴾And no example or similitude do they bring (to oppose or to find fault in you or in this Qur'ân), but We reveal to you the truth (against that similitude or example), and the better explanation thereof.﴿ Some of the Salaf (righteous predecessors) said that this Ayah generally indicates every argument made by the people of falsehood till the Day of Judgment.

It was authentically reported in many Sahih (authentic) Hadiths ﴾that some of the Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) said to the Prophet (peace be upon him): Verily we perceive in our minds that which every one of us considers too grave to express. He (the Prophet) said: Do you really

perceive it? They said: Yes. Upon this he remarked: That is the manifest Faith.) In interpreting this report, some scholars claimed that Satan may throw man into doubts and insinuations which the latter finds too difficult to spell out due to its abominable hideousness, to the extent that falling from the sky is considered easier than expressing them. Thus, the worshipper's denunciation of these insinuations, dismissal of them as heinous and fighting them away is pure faith.

True belief in Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He); in the perfection of His Names and Attributes, the nonexistence of either partner or peer to Him, and that He is the All-Knowing Supreme Creator, the All-Wise and the Well-Acquainted (with all things), entails disapproval and confutation of and disbelief in such false doubts and insinuations.

Undoubtedly, what the related colleague told you is considered an insinuation. You have done well. Your answer to him is correct, may Allah grant you more knowledge and success. I will mention here - in sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) - some of the Hadiths reported on this question besides some of the sayings of scholars so that the falsity of this doubt may be cleared for you and your colleague. You would learn what true believers should say whenever they experience such a doubt. Then, I will conclude my answer with what Allah (Exalted be He) makes easy for me in this honorable situation. Allah is the One Who guides us and leads us to the Right Way.

Imam Al-Bukhari (may Allah be merciful with him) said in Al-Jami` Al-Sahih, P. 336 ,Vol. VI, "Fath Al-Bary" [Al-Matba`ah Al-Salafiyyah Print], "chapter on the Character of Satan and its Hosts": Yahya ibn Bakir narrated from Al-Layth from `Aqil from Ibn Shihab from `Urwah ibn Al-Zubayr on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

(Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created so-and-so? 'till he says, 'Who has created your Lord?' So, when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts.) Then, Al-Bukhari **narrated the same Hadith in "chapter on Al-I`tisam", P.264, Vol. XIII of "Fath Al-Bary"** on the authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (People will keep on asking, until they say, 'Allah is the Creator of everything; who, then, created Allah?') End of quote.

Besides, Muslim related in his Sahih the former wording of Abu Hurayrah, in P. 154, part II, Vol. I, Commentary on Sahih Muslim by Al-Nawawi (may Allah be merciful with him). Also, Muslim related another wording of the Hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (People will keep on asking, until this is said: 'Allah created the creation; who, then, created Allah?' Whoever experiences anything like that should say, 'I believe in Allah and His Messengers'.) Muslim then related the Hadith in a different wording.

Again, he reported it on the authority of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: (Allah (may He be Glorified and Exalted) has said: 'Your Ummah (nation) would keep asking about this and that until they would say: 'Well, it is Allah Who created all creation; then who created Allah?')

Moreover, Muslim (may Allah be merciful with him) related on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may

Allah be pleased with him) that he said: ﴿Some people from among the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) came to him and said, "Verily we feel in our hearts that which every one of us considers too grave to express. He (the Prophet) said, "Do you really feel that?" They said, "Yes." Upon this he remarked, "That is manifest Faith."﴾ Then, Muslim related on the authority of Ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: ﴿the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked about evil promptings, to which he replied: It is (an indication of) pure faith.﴾

In addition, Al-Nawawy (may Allah be merciful with him) said in his Commentary on Sahih Muslim when mentioning these Hadiths: As for the meaning and significance of the Hadiths, his (peace be upon him) saying: "That is manifest faith" and "pure faith" means

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that your regarding it too grave to spell out such insinuations is manifest faith, for fearing to express them rather than believing in them comes from the person who has perfect faith and who denies doubts and suspicions. You should bear in mind that the second narration implies regarding it as grave, without mentioning this apparent meaning, for it is mentioned in the first narration. Therefore, Muslim (may Allah be merciful with him) gave precedence to the first narration. It was said to mean that Satan insinuates to those whom it gets tired of tempting, so that he troubles them with insinuations for having failed to tempt them. As for the disbelievers, Satan approaches them from everywhere. It does not limit itself to insinuating to those disbelievers, but it manipulates them as it wishes. Based on this meaning, the Hadith means that the cause of insinuation is pure Faith, or that the insinuation is the mark of pure Faith. This was the opinion of Al-Qady `Iyad. As regards the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: ﴿Whoever experiences this state should say: I believe in Allah.﴾ **and in the second narration** ﴿One should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts﴾ **means that one should give up such false thoughts and resort to Allah to help them get rid of it. Imam Al-Maziry (may Allah be merciful to him) said that the literal meaning of the Hadith is that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered them to push away such evil thoughts by giving them up and rejecting them without looking for evidence or attempting to nullify them. He added that there are two types of thoughts:**

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Inconsistent thoughts which are not brought forth by doubts are to be pushed away by giving them up, as is indicated in the Hadith Referring to insinuation. Accordingly, baseless incidentals are to be dispelled without considering their proofs, since there is no basis to consider. On the other hand, consistent thoughts which are brought forth by doubts are to be dispelled only by inference and investigation of their invalidity. Allah knows best.

As for the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying: ﴿One should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts﴾ it means that whenever one encounters such an insinuation, they should resort to Allah (Exalted be He) and seek His Help to divert such evil, and should give up such thoughts. One should know that such a thought is of the insinuations of Satan, which seeks to spread corruption and temptation. Thus, one should take no heed of these insinuations and should put an end to them by occupying themselves with other useful things. Allah knows best.

Al-Hafizh, commenting - in "Fath Al-Bary" - on the Hadith narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah which is mentioned at the beginning of the answer, said: His saying, "One should then seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts" means that when Satan

inspires such a question, one should not indulge in such thoughts. Rather, one should seek Allah's Help to dispel them, and should realize that Satan wants to spoil their faith and mind through these insinuations. Muslims should thus strive to dispel them by getting preoccupied with other useful things. Al-Khattaby said: The significance of this Hadith is that when Satan insinuates such a thoughts to a person, and the person seeks refuge with Allah

and stops indulging in them, the thought will be dispelled. He added: Otherwise, if a human being makes such an insinuation, it could be refuted with proofs. The difference between them is that the insinuation of the human being takes the form of question and answer and, being restricted, one can put an end to it by following the right way of argumentation. On the other hand, the insinuations of Satan have no end. Rather, whenever an insinuation is refuted with evidence, Satan makes another insinuation, till man is thrown into confusion. We seek refuge with Allah from that! **Al-Khattaby also said: His saying, "Who has created your Lord?" is contradictory; its end contradicts its beginning, for it is impossible for the creator to be created. Besides, if the question consistent, it would necessitate sequence, which is impossible. Reason has proven that the creatures are in need of a creator; so if a creator were in need of a creator, he will be one of the creatures. [End of quote]** What he thus claims of differentiation between Satan's insinuations and the sophistry of humans is disputable, for it was authentically related by Muslim on the authority of Hisham ibn `Urwah from his father: ﴾People will keep on asking, until this is said: 'Allah created the creation, who, then, created Allah?' Whoever encounters anything like that, let him say, 'I believe in Allah.'﴿ He regarded giving up indulgence in this as equal whether the questioner is a human being or otherwise. In another narration by Muslim on the authority of

Abu Hurayrah who said: Two persons asked me about it. And since questioning about this is insignificant, it does not deserve an answer. It may be that giving it up equals giving up indulgence in questioning Allah's Being and Attributes. Al-Maziry said that thoughts are divided into two types; the illustration of which is give above. Al-Tayyiby also said: He (peace be upon him) ordered seeking refuge with Allah and getting preoccupied with something else, and did not order contemplation of or arguing them, since knowing that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is not in need of a creator is essential and indubitable. Moreover, nourishing this thought only increases one's bewilderment. Therefore, the only way out is to resort and hold fast to Allah (Exalted be He). There is a reference in the Hadith to disapproval of someone's asking a lot about what does not matter to him and that which he needs not. It also includes one of the signs of Muhammad's prophethood, for he foretold what was going to happen and it did happen.

Shaykh Al-Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah be merciful to him) said in his "Muwafaqat Sahih Al-Manqul Li-Sarih Al-Ma`qul": Sequence means sequence of effects, i.e. the event has a doer and the doer has a doer in return, which is

Batil (null and void), according to sound reasoning and agreement of rational people. It is that sequence which the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered us to seek refuge with Allah against it and to give it up. For, one should then say: ﴾I truly believe in Allah and His messengers﴿ **as is mentioned in the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) on the authority of Abu Hurayrah who said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:** ﴾Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created so-and-so? 'till he says, 'Who has

created your Lord?' So, when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts.) **In another narration:** (People will keep on asking, until it is said: "Allah has created the creation, who, then, has created Allah? He (Abu Hurayrah) said: "Then while I was in the Masjid (mosque), some Bedouin people came to me and said: 'O **Abu Hurayrah!** This is Allah, Who has created the creation; but who, then, has created Allah?'" So he grabbed some pebbles in his hand and flung it at them, and said: 'Get up, Get up! My close friend (the Prophet) told the truth.) **In the Sahih it was also narrated on the authority of Anas ibn Malik that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:** (Allah has said: 'Your Ummah (nation) would keep asking about this and that until they would say: 'Well, it is Allah Who created all creation, then who created Allah?')

This is end of the summary of the words of the Shaykh (may Allah be merciful to him). It may be now clear to you and your colleague, who brought forth this doubt, through the quoted Ayahs, Hadiths and reports of the scholars how false and baseless are such doubts. Allah (Glorified be He) has no partner, peer or equal to Him. He is Perfect in His Essence, Attributes and Deeds. He is the Creator of everything and anything other than Him is created. Allah (Exalted be He) tells us in His Ever-Glorious Qur'an and through the words of His trustful Messenger (peace be upon him) what should one believe in, regarding Allah (Glorified be He) and what guides us to such belief through His Names, Attributes and manifest Signs, including the heavens, the earth, the mountains, the seas, the rivers and all other creatures; and even through humans themselves. All this provides evidence of Allah's Might, Magnificence, Perfect Knowledge and Wisdom. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.) and (And on the earth are signs for those who have Faith with certainty.)

The core of His Essence and its Shape and His Attributes, are part of the Ghayb (the Unseen) which one should believe in and take for granted - without indulging much in questioning them - following the example of the Salaf, Sahabah (may Allah be pleased with them) and their successors in righteousness. They did not indulge in or ask about this. Rather, they believed in Allah (Glorified be He), and what He has told about Himself in His Book and through the words of His Messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him), without any addition. They also believed that there is nothing like Him, and that He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.

Whoever experiences such insinuations should renounce them from the bottom of their hearts, and say: "I believe in Allah and His Messengers". They should also seek refuge with Allah from the incitements of Satan. Indeed, they should dispel and discard them, as the Messenger (peace be upon him) ordered us in the Hadiths quoted above. He (peace be upon him) said that counting them as grave and renouncing them is (a manifestation of) pure Faith. One should not keep pace with those who ask such skeptic questions, for this leads to great evil and endless doubts. Therefore, the best way to put an end to such insinuations and to be safe from it is to follow and rely on the commandments of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and to give up

indulgence in them. This is in accordance with Allah's (Glorified and Exalted be He) saying: (And if an evil whisper comes to you from Shaitân (Satan), then seek refuge with Allâh. Verily, He is All-Hearer,

All-Knower.)

Seeking refuge with Allah (may he be Glorified), resorting to Him and abandoning the insinuations triggered by false philosophers and whoever follows their way - in questioning Allah's Names and Attributes and whatever Allah kept within the limits of His Own Knowledge -, without questing for proof or evidence will be following the way of rightful and believing people. It is also the path of safety, salvation and rescue from the plots of devils among human beings and Jinn; may Allah save us, you and all Muslims from their tricks. Therefore, when some people asked Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) about such insinuations, he threw them with pebbles and did not answer them. He only said : My close friend (the Prophet) told the truth.

In this regard, the Muslim should recite the Ever-Glorious Qur'an frequently and contemplate it, for it clarifies Allah's Attributes and Sublimity, and provides evidence for His Existence that instills faith, love and awe in the hearts. It induces firm belief that Allah (Glorified be He) is the Lord and Creator of everything. There is no god or lord except Him.

The Muslims should also ask Allah (Exalted be He) to grant them more useful knowledge, insight, firm adherence to truth, and safety from slipping into misguidance after having been guided. He (Glorified be He) directs and urges His Servants to ask for His Favors, and promises them to respond to their invocations. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (And your Lord said: "Invoke Me, [i.e. believe in My Oneness (Islâmic Monotheism) and ask Me for anything] I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship [i.e. do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness, (Islâmic Monotheism)] they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!") There are many other Ayahs that indicate this meaning.

I ask Allah to guide us, your colleague and all other Muslims to understand the religion and to keep away from deluding temptations, tricks and insinuations of the devils among mankind and Jinn. For, He is the One Who is Capable of doing so. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh. May Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon His Servant and our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions.

President of the Islamic University in Medinah

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The attribute of "the Self" of Allah

Q: Is the attribute of (the Self) of Allah an attribute of Divine Essence?

A: This is true, Allah (Glorified be He) says about `Isa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) that he said: ﴾You know what is in my inner-self though I do not know what is in Yours﴿ i.e. the "Self of Allah".

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101- A question about the attribute of Allah's Essence

Q: Is the essence of Allah an attribute to Him or it refers to the essence itself?

A: He is described as having an essence and a self, as Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿You know what is in my inner-self though I do not know what is in Yours﴾

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102- Ascribing the attribute of having two eyes to Allah (Exalted be He)

Q: The Predecessors said: Allah (Exalted be He) has two eyes but sometimes the text comes in plural form and sometimes in single. We know that

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Allah (Exalted be He) has two eyes; where is the proof of that?

A: Allah (He may be Glorified) is described that He has two eyes. He is not one-eyed like the Antichrist who is one-eyed in the right eye. The dual form may be a reference to the plural in Arabic language, as Allah (He may be Glorified) says in Surah Al-Tahrim: (If you two (wives of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم : 'Aishah and Hafsah رضي الله عنهما) turn in repentance to Allâh, (it will be better for you), your hearts are indeed so inclined (to oppose what the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم likes)) i.e. it means the heart of 'Aishah and Hafsah and they are only two.

So, He expressed in the plural form to indicate duality. Likewise, His saying: (And (as for) the male thief and the female thief, cut off (from the wrist joint) their (right) hands) i.e. both hands. By this we remove the problem in Allah's saying: (So wait patiently (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) for the Decision of your Lord, for verily, you are under Our Eyes) And in His saying: (Floating under Our Eyes) May Allah grant us success!

The General Mufty (Islamic scholar qualified to issue legal opinions) of the Kingdom of the Saudi Arabia.

`Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

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103- Allah's Ma`iyyah entails comprehensive knowledge

From `Abdul `Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother, may Allah grant him success! Amen

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

A group of Shaykhs came to tell me that many laypeople and their likes in Buraydah libel His Eminence Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih Al-`Uthaymin because of his statement that Allah's Ma`iyyah (association or being with) with His Servants means that He is with His Creation. This statement causes knowledge seekers to defame him. It is worth mentioning that the Shaykh retracted his statement in my presence and others, but he did not do so in writing. The said Shaykh suggests that you invite him to ask him to prepare a formal statement declaring that he retracts the view that Allah is with His Creation and that he advocates the Salaf's opinion in this regard. They held that the general Ma`iyyah means His comprehensive Knowledge, while the private Ma`iyyah entails protection and support on the part of Allah.

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Although Allah is established on His Throne, He is with His Creation wherever they are and knows their secrets and private counsels without being mixed with them. I would like to inform you that this suggestion is appealing to me, as it is the only way of ending the libel. It is well known that returning to the truth is a virtue and is not a vice. Although Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih Al-`Uthaymin is one of today's best scholars and greatly contributing in spreading knowledge and Da`wah with his appreciated efforts and useful books, he is liable to err. As stated by Imam Malik ibn Anas and other scholars, no scholar is infallible. We ask Allah to guide you to every good deed and make us and all Muslims keys to goodness and barriers to evil. We ask Him to also protect us from all that displeases Him, for He is All-Hearer, Ever Near.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh

Chairman of

the Departments of Scholarly Research, Ifta', Daw`ah, and Guidance

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104- Allah's descent

to the world sky during the last third of night

Q: how can we refute the saying that since Muslims believe that Allah (may he be Exalted) descends to the heavens of this world during the last third of night, this entails that he does not rise over his `Arsh (Throne) as the times for the last third of the night vary according to different places on earth?

A: It is the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) himself who told that Allah (Glorified be He) descends every night to the world's sky when the last third portion of the night begins: (Our Lord 'Exalted be He' descends every night to the world sky when the last third portion of the night begins. He says: Is there any supplicant to answer his supplication? Is there anyone seeking My Favor to give him? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness to forgive him until the dawn emerges.) (Agreed upon by Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim). However, scholars clarified that such descent is not like that of humans. Rather, it is a descent that suits the Majesty of Allah (Exalted be He) and that no one knows its manner except Him (Glorified be He). Allah (Exalted be He) descends in the way that He wills and this does not entail that He (Exalted be He) leaves His `Arsh for Allah's descent suits

His loftiness. In addition, though the last one third of the night differs from one place to another; this does not mean that Allah leaves His `Arsh for Allah has His unique Attributes that can not be compared to the characteristics of any of His creatures. Allah (Glorified be He) says: (There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.) and: (He (Allâh) knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them (in the Hereafter) but they will never compass anything of His Knowledge.) Moreover, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in Ayat-ul-Kursy (the Qur'anic Verse of Allah's Chair, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:255): (And they will never compass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills.) There are many other Ayahs to the same effect. Thus Allah (Glorified be He) is the Only One Who knows the manner of His descent. Consequently, we have to believe in Allah's descent (to the sky of this world) in a way that suits Him. We have to believe that Allah (Exalted be He) rises over the `Arsh and at the same time He (Exalted be He) descends to the sky of this world in a way that suits His Majesty. Allah's descent is not like ours. Descending from a housetop is a human descent, for example, or taking off in a car. In such cases, the person does not exist in the same place any more. It is worth mentioning that any Qiyas (analogy) made between Allah and His creatures is Fasid (void) for Allah (Exalted be He) is not to be compared to any of His creatures.

We believe that allah rises over His `arsh in a way that suits Him (Glorified be He). We do not know the manner in which He rises over His `Arsh. We do neither compare Him to any of His creatures nor liken Him to any of them. Rather, we say that Allah (Exalted be He) rises over His `Arsh in a way that suits His Majesty and sublimity.

It may be worthy mentioning that when theologians went into this matter wrongly, they fell into the trap of big confusion and were led to denying the existence of Allah entirely. They said that Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is neither inside the world nor outside it and thus they described Allah of being non-existent. To avoid such a serious mistake, the Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet) and those who followed them amongst Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body) believed in what is mentioned by Qur'an and Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet) as it is and stated that no one knows the manner of Allah's Attributes except Him (Glorified be He). Imam Malik (may Allah be merciful with him) thus said: "Allah's rising over the `Arsh is well-known, the manner of such rising is not known, believing in it is Wajib 'obligatory', and enquiring about it 'i.e. its manner' is Bid`ah 'innovation in religion'." Besides, it is narrated on the authority of Um Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) and Rabi`ah ibn Abu Abul-Rahman the Shaykh of Malik (may Allah be merciful with them both) that the former said: "Alla's rising over `Arsh is known, its manner can not be perceived, and believing in it is Wajib." Whoever follows the way of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah regarding the matter referred to above will be saved from many misconceptions and beliefs of falsehood people. It is sufficient for us to believe in Allah's Attributes as they are without giving them any extra explanation.

We thus have to declare that Allah hears, speaks, sees, becomes angry or pleased in a manner that suits Him (Glorified be He) for no one knows the manner of His Attributes except Allah Alone. This is the way of

salvation and knowledge and it is the view of our Salaf (righteous predecessors) which is the most sound, accurate, and wise view through which a Muslim is saved from all misconceptions and deviating ideas of stray people. Finally, ascribing the knowledge of the manner of Allah's Attributes to Allah Himself is the view that is based on the correct understanding and sincere adherence to Qur'an and Sunnah. May Allah grant us success.

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105- A question about Allah's Attributes

Q: The Hadith of the seven (people) whom Allah will shade with His Shadow on the Day when there will be no shade other than His Shade, can Allah be described as having a shade according to this Hadith?

A: This is right as mentioned in the relevant Hadith. However, some narrations of the Hadith mentioned: (in the shade of His Throne.) However, the narration of the Two Sahih (authentic) Books of Hadith (i.e. Al-Bukhari and Muslim) is "in His Shade." Therefore, it is a Shade that fits Allah (Exalted be He) but we do not know how as with all the Attributes of Allah and in accordance with the creed of Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim community). May Allah grant us success!

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106- Ruling on saying: O Face of Allah

Q: A sister from Bishah asks: I hear some people, upon hearing or seeing strange things, say: "O Face of Allah". What is the ruling on such a saying? May Allah reward you the best!

A: It is not permissible for any Muslim to invoke any attribute of Allah according to the declaration of all scholars, as if to say: "O Face of Allah, O knowledge of Allah, O Mercy of Allah" and so on. However, it is obligatory to invoke Allah (Glorified be He) by His Beautiful Names, for He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And (all) the Most Beautiful Names belong to Allâh, so call on Him by them, and leave the company of those who belie or deny (or utter impious speech against) His Names.﴿ Therefore, a person should say: "O Allah, Compassionate, Merciful" and the like.

It is also Mustahab (desirable) to offer Tawassul (supplicating to Allah in the name of/by virtue of the status of) by the Attributes of Allah through saying: "O Allah, I ask you by Your Greatness or by virtue of Your Great Power, Forbearance, etc". May Allah grant us success!

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107- A question on the Attributes of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He)

From `Abdul `Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz to the honorable brother

professor M. A. H, may Allah safeguard you.

As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you).

In reference to your letter in which you wrote: I would like your Eminence to explain the meaning of the following Ayahs (Qur'anic verses): (And He is Allâh (to be worshipped Alone) in the heavens and on the earth; He knows what you conceal and what you reveal, and He knows what you earn (good or bad). (See V.43:84)) And: (His Kursî extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.) And: (It is He (Allâh) Who is the only Ilâh (God to be worshipped) in the heaven and the only Ilâh (God to be worshipped) on the earth. And He be the All-Wise, the All-Knower.) And: (There is no Najwâ (secret counsel) of three but He is their fourth (with His Knowledge, while He Himself is over the Throne, over the seventh heaven), nor of five but He is their sixth (with His Knowledge), nor of less than that or more but He is with them (with His Knowledge) wheresoever they may be. And afterwards on the Day of Resurrection He will inform them of what they did. Verily, Allâh is the All-Knower of everything.)

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I would like your Eminence also to explain the Hadith of the slave-girl which is related by Muslim when the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) asked her: ('Where is Allah?' She replied: 'In the heaven.' He (peace be upon him) asked her: 'Who am I?' She replied: 'You are the Messenger of Allah.' He (peace be upon him) said to her master: 'Free her for she is a believer.')

I would like you to explain the meanings of these Noble Ayahs and the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

Answer: The general meaning of these Ayahs and the Prophetic Hadith shows the Glorification and Sublimity of Allah above His Creation, and nothing of His creatures' affairs, whether small or large, secret or open, is hidden from Him. These Ayahs also demonstrate His Comprehensive Power over everything and free him of disability (Glorified and Exalted be He).

Following are the detailed explanations of each Ayah (Qur'anic verse): As for Allah's (Exalted be He) saying: (His Kursî extends over the heavens and the earth) It denotes the greatness and vastness of His Kursy (Allah's Chair)

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indicating the greatness and excellent competency of its Creator. His saying: (and He feels no fatigue

in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.❩ It means that it does not burden or cause Him fatigue to guard the heavens and the earth and all that is in between. Rather, this is an easy matter for Him. Allah (Exalted be He) sustains everything, has perfect watch over everything, nothing ever escapes His knowledge and no matter is ever a secret to Him. All matters are insignificant, modest and humble before Him. He is the Most Rich, worthy of all praise. He does what He wills, and no one can ask Him about what He does, while they will be questioned. He has supreme power over all things and perfect alertness concerning everything. He is the Most High, the Greatest, there is no deity worthy of worship except Him, and no Lord other than Him.

His (Glorified be He) saying: ❨And He is Allâh (to be worshipped Alone) in the heavens and on the earth; He knows what you conceal and what you reveal, and He knows what you earn (good or bad). (See V.43:84)❩ It indicates that it is He Who is called Allah throughout the heavens and the earth; it is He who is worshipped. The inhabitants of the heavens and the earth believe in the Oneness of Allah and His Oneness of Worship. They call Him Allah and they supplicate Him in fear and hope, except the disbelievers among the Jinn and mankind. It also denotes that the Knowledge of Allah encompasses everything and all that His servants do secretly or publicly. It does not matter whether the deed is done secretly or openly. All the deeds of His servants, good and evil, are recorded with Him.

His (Glorified be He) saying: ❨It is He (Allâh) Who is the only Ilâh (God to be worshipped) in the heaven and the only Ilâh (God to be worshipped) on the earth. And He be the All-Wise, the All-Knower.❩ means that He is the Lord of those who are in the heavens and the Lord of those who are on earth; all of them worship Him and are humble before Him, except those who disbelieve in Him. He is Wise in His legislation and Predestination and has full knowledge of all the deeds of His servants. His (Glorified and Exalted be He) saying: ❨Have you not seen that Allâh knows whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth? There is no Najwâ (secret counsel) of three but He is their fourth (with His Knowledge, while He Himself is over the Throne, over the seventh heaven), nor of five but He is their sixth (with His Knowledge), nor of less than that or more but He is with them (with His Knowledge) wheresoever they may be. And afterwards on the Day of Resurrection He will inform them of what they did. Verily, Allâh is the All-Knower of everything.❩ It means that Allah (Glorified be He) watches all His creation wherever they are, perfectly hears their speech, whether uttered in public or secret, and knows their deeds. His honorable angels whose assignment is to write down their deeds and record all that they say, even though He has better knowledge of it and hears them perfectly. According to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body), the phrase Ma`ahum (with them) in the Ayah quoted above refers to Allah's Knowledge. There is no doubt that His Knowledge encompasses all things, as well as His Sight. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is never lacking in knowledge of all their affairs. Meanwhile, He is above all creation, He makes Istiwa' (Allah's rising over the Throne in a manner that befits Him, may He be Glorified and Exalted),

and does not equate with His creatures' attributes. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ❨There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.❩ On the Day of Resurrection, Allah (Exalted be He) will inform them of what they did in this worldly life. He is the All-Knower of everything and is, of all things, encompassing. He is the Knower of the unseen. Not absent from Him is an atom's weight within the heavens or within the Earth or what is smaller or greater than that, but it is in a Clear Register.

As for the Hadith of the slave-girl whose master wanted to expiate his mistreatment of her by freeing her, her master came to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and told him about his act. The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked him to bring her to him and asked her: ('Where is Allah?' She replied: 'In the heaven.' He (peace be upon him) asked her, 'Who am I?' She replied: 'You are the Messenger of Allah.' He (peace be upon him) said to her master: 'Free her for she is a believer'.)

This Hadith indicates that Allah (Exalted be He) is above His Creation and that acknowledgement of this matter counts as proof of Iman (Faith).

This is a brief answer for your question. However, every Muslim is obliged to follow the line of conduct of Ahl Al-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah with regard to such Ayahs and authentic Hadith, which convey the same meanings and discuss Allah's Names and Attributes. They believe in and affirm His Names and Attributes

in a way that suits Him without Tamthil (likening Allah's Attributes to those of His Creation), Ta`til (denial of Allah's Attributes), Takyif (questioning Allah's Attributes) or Tahrif (distortion of the meaning). This is the right approach adhered and agreed upon by the Salaf (righteous predecessors).

Every Muslim should avoid what causes Allah's anger and give up the approach of the misguided people who negate or allegorically interpret Allah's Attributes. Allah (may He be Praised) is greatly Exalted over the ignorant and unjust people. The Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta' issued a Fatwa confirming the Loftiness of Allah (Glorified be He). Kindly, find attached a copy of Al-`Aqidah Al-Wasitiyyah, a book written by Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah with commentary by Shaykh Muhammad Khalil Al-Harras. This book discusses the topic at hand extensively. May Allah grant us all useful knowledge and help us work accordingly and succeed in doing what pleases Him, for He is All-Hearer and Responsive! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

Chairman of

the Departments of Scholarly Research, Ifta', Da`wah, and Guidance

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108- Establishing that dwellers of Paradise will see Allah (glory be to Him)

Q: Was it related in the Qur'an and Sunnah that people of Paradise would see Allah in the morning and evening and visit Him?

A: It is authentically reported in the Mutawatir Hadiths (Hadith Mutawatir is a Hadith reported by a significant number of narrators throughout the chain of narration, whose agreement upon a lie is impossible) that Paradise dwellers will see their Lord (may He be Exalted and Glorified) in Paradise as Allah wills and also believers will see Him on Day of Resurrection as He (glory be to Him) wills.

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109- Ruling on whoever denies seeing Allah in the Hereafter

Q: Is seeing Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) authentically established? What is the evidence on this?

What is the preponderant opinion in this regard? Will the hypocrites see Allah on the Day of Resurrection?

A: Seeing Allah in the Hereafter is authentically established according to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim main body), and whoever denies this is a Kafir (disbeliever). The Mu'minin (believers) will see him on the Day of Resurrection and in Jannah (paradise), according to His Will as unanimously established by the Ijma` (consensus) of Ahl-ul-Sunnah. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Some faces that Day shall be Nâdirah (shining and radiant).﴿ ﴾Looking at their Lord (Allâh).﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honour of glancing at the Countenance of Allâh جل جلاله).﴿

The Prophet (peace be upon him) clarified that "even more" to mean the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah (Exalted and Sublime). Furthermore, several Hadith are reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) by Tawatur (a significant number of narrators whose agreement upon a lie is impossible) stating that the Mu'minin will see their Lord on the Day of Resurrection and in Jannah. Yet, He will not be seen in the worldly life as He (Glorified be He) says: ﴾No vision can grasp Him﴿ in addition to His Saying to Musa (Moses): ﴾You cannot see Me﴿ It is also authentically reported that he (peace be upon him) said: ﴾None of you shall see his Lord until he dies.﴿ For this world is not a place of sight, since seeing Allah is the supreme bliss that the dwellers of Jannah will be blessed with. But since this abode is not an abode of bliss; rather troubles, sorrow and Taklif (legal accountability for actions); therefore, He will not be seen therein. This will be experienced by the Mu'minin in the Hereafter. With regards to Kuffar (disbelievers), they will be veiled from seeing Him, as He (Glorified be He) says: ﴾Nay! Surely they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.﴿ As previously mentioned, the Kuffar will be veiled from seeing Allah on the Day of Resurrection but the believers will see Him in the Hereafter. Also, the correct opinion is that the Messenger

(peace be upon him) did not see His Lord. Concerning the hypocrites, this matter is uncertain, for some reports have indicated that on that Day, the hypocrites will exist among this Ummah (nation of creed), but there is no clear evidence that they will see Him on the Day of Resurrection.

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110- The ruling on the phrase "Allah is the One Who knows the intentions"

Q: There is a phrase frequently used at the end of articles published in some newspapers, which is "Allah is the One Who knows the intentions". What is the ruling on writing such a phrase? What does it mean?

A: There is no harm in using such a phrase, because it means that Allah (Glorified be He) is the Only One Who knows the intentions of His servants; there is no Ilah (god) but Him and no Lord but Him, according to His saying (Glorified and Exalted be He), ﴾And know that Allâh knows what is in your minds, so fear Him.﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says, ﴾And Allâh warns you against Himself (His punishment)﴿ He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says, ﴾Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): "Whether you hide what is in your breasts or reveal it, Allâh knows it﴿

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Chapter on Tawbah

111- Major sins are forgiven by sincere Tawbah

Dear respected Shaykh `Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz, may Allah safeguard you! As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

With regard to forgiveness of major sins, is it necessary to offer Tawbah (repentance to Allah) or do acts of obedience such as Salah (prayer) and the like suffice in clearing major sins out without Tawbah? May Allah reward you the best!

A: As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh

Proofs from Allah's Book and purified Sunnah indicate that sincere Tawbah is a must for forgiveness of major sins and the one who does these sins is left to the Will of Allah, so long as he dies as a Muslim. Allah (Exalted be He) says: (If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall expiate from you your (small) sins, and admit you to a Noble Entrance (i.e. Paradise).) Allah (Glorified be He) also says: (And those who invoke not any other ilâh (god) along with Allâh, nor kill such person as Allâh has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse - and whoever does this shall receive the punishment.) (The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace;) (Except those who repent and believe (in Islâmic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds)

Allah (Glorified be He) also says: (Verily, Allâh forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills) The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ("The Five (Obligatory Daily) Prayers, and from (one) Jumu'ah (Friday) Prayer to (the next) Jumu'ah Prayer, and from Ramadan to Ramadan: are expiations for whatever (sins committed) between them, provided that major sins are avoided.") Related by Muslim in his Sahih (book of authentic Hadiths). There are many Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) and Hadiths in this regard.

It is thus evident that absolute Ayahs and Hadith on forgiving sins by good deeds are qualified by other Ayahs and Hadiths stipulating the avoidance of major sins. This is a legal basis according to people of knowledge, may Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad and upon his family and companions!

`Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

Mufty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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112- The ruling on making up for Salah and Sawm by a person who abandons them intentionally and then performs Tawbah

Q: A man used to commit major sins; he did not perform Salah (Prayer) or observe Sawm (Fast), but he was guided by Allah two years ago. He avoided major sins and began performing Salah and Sawm. Should he make up for the missed Salah and Sawm before his Tawbah (repentance to Allah)?

A: Tawbah wipes out previous sins. If a person did not perform Salah or Sawm and used to commit major sins, and then performed Tawbah, it wipes out previous sins. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in the Qur'an, ﴾And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴿ A person who performs Tawbah becomes successful. He (Glorified be He) also says, ﴾O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins﴿ The word "may" when said about Allah denotes obligation; Allah will expiate their sins if they repent. He (Glorified and Exalted be He) also says,

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﴾And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).﴿ He (Glorified be He) also says, ﴾And those who invoke not any other ilâh (god) along with Allâh, nor kill such person as Allâh has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse﴿

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) described the status of a person who commits Zina (adultery), theft or sins saying, ﴾And those who invoke not any other ilâh (god) along with Allâh, nor kill such person as Allâh has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse - and whoever does this shall receive the punishment.﴿ The attributes of servants of the Merciful Allah include that they do not invoke any other Ilah (god) with Allah; they do not kill humans whose killing Allah has forbidden except for a just cause; and they do not commit Zina. The attributes of the servants of Allah are chastity, abstaining from killing people without a just cause, sincerity with Allah and complete Tawhid (monotheism). A person who does otherwise, whether Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship), killing someone without a just cause or committing Zina, ﴾shall receive the punishment. The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace;﴿ We seek refuge with Allah from that. ﴾Except those who repent and believe (in Islâmic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds; for those, Allâh will change their sins into good deeds, and Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴿

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The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴾Tawbah wipes out all the previous sins.﴿ He (peace be upon him) also said, ﴾The one who repents of a sin is like the one who has never sinned.﴿ If a person performs Tawbah of their sins, Allah will forgive them. Tawbah has three conditions: regretting the past sins, quitting them, and having an ultimate resolution never to do it again, out of fearing Allah and honoring Him sincerely. If a person does so, they have performed sincere Tawbah with which Allah may forgive their previous sins. There is a fourth condition, if the sin is related to a person's rights, which is asking for their forgiveness or returning that right to that person. If the sin is related to doing injustice to someone such as taking their money, hitting them or killing them,

they should be recompensed or their heirs given the right of Qisas (just retaliation), unless they forgive. If the issue is related to money, they should be given the money that was taken from them. If it is related to honor, they should be asked for forgiveness if you backbit them. If this is not possible, you should supplicate to Allah for them and mention good things about them in the same places you used to say bad things about them. This means that if the right is related to another person, there is a fourth condition that must be fulfilled, which is giving them their right or asking them for forgiveness.

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113- A question about making up for `Ibadah after Tawbah

Q: What is your opinion, our respected Shaykh, about someone who has intentionally abandoned Salah (Prayer) and Sawm (Fast), but then performed sincere Tawbah (repentance to Allah), and is now performing all the acts of `Ibadah (worship)? Is he required to make up for Salah and Sawm or is Tawbah enough?

A: A person who abandons Salah and Sawm, and then performs Tawbah, does not have to make up for the obligations he abandoned, because abandoning Salah is considered Kufr (disbelief) that renders a person out of Islam, even if that person does not deny its obligation according to the most authentic opinion of scholars. Allah

(Glorified and Exalted be He) says, (Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief), their past will be forgiven.)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (Islam wipes out all previous misdeeds; and Tawbah wipes out all previous misdeeds as well.) There are many legal indications on this. For example, Allah (Glorified be He) says, (And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).) He (Glorified be He) also says, (O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise))

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said, (A person who repents from their sins is like the one who has never committed a sin.) It is prescribed for a person who has performed Tawbah to do many righteous deeds after Tawbah and ask Allah frequently to help them stay firmly on Al-Haqq (the Truth) and grant them a good end. May Allah grant us success!

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114- Accepting the repentance of those who have ill-gotten money

Q: A man earned all his money through unlawful means. He used it for marriage, Hajj and business. Now, he wants to repent; what should he do?

A: When a person repents, Allah will accept his repentance. As for the money, scholars are of different views regarding that money whether it belongs to the person or not, because Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and stops eating Ribâ (usury) shall not be punished for the past; his case is for Allâh (to judge); but whoever returns [to Ribâ (usury)], such are the dwellers of the Fire - they will abide therein.﴿

If one takes from it what is sufficient for him and gives what remains as charity, it will be sufficient. But if one gives it all as a charity in all righteous deeds, it will be safer for him. If one is poor, he is permitted to make use of it. This is because Allah says: ﴾shall not be punished for the past﴿ This includes all disbelievers who embraced Islam. They used to deal with Riba (usury/interest), which is prohibited for them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not ask them to return the money back to its owners after they embraced Islam and repented to Allah. Some scholars said that the Muslim is similar to a disbeliever in this regard. Moreover, he will be more worthy of that money than disbelievers.

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This is because depriving him of that money may drive him away from repenting to Allah. But if it is easy to give it as charity, it will be better in order to escape differences of scholars with regard to his money. Moreover, his Hajj will be valid, because it is physical work that has no relation to money.

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115- Sincere repentance

Q: Our Muslim brother from Safaqis in Tunisia says in his question:

What is the way to sincere repentance?

A: The only way to repentance is to regret past sins, and have firm determination not to commit them again, and to give them up and bewaring of it out of devotion, love, glorification, hope and fear of Allah. If a sin is related to people, a person should seek forgiveness from the wronged owner. If it is not easy for him to do so, he may supplicate to Allah for him, seek forgiveness for him, and remind people of his best actions, which he used to do. If it is related to money, he should give it back or seek his forgiveness and when the wronged person forgives him, he will be free of the sin. May Allah grant us success!

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116- Sincere Tawbah is success and happiness

Q: Dear Shaykh, I am a Muslim young man and I repented to Allah and made pledge to Him to keep steady on my Tawbah (repentance). I started my Tawbah during Hajj (Pilgrimage) and I pray to Allah to help me maintain this Tawbah and adhere to it. I would like to inform you that I sincerely love you for the sake of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

A: We ask Allah to grant us and you steadfastness to His Religion and grant us and you adherence to Tawbah (repentance to Allah) and uprightness. We recommend you to fear Allah and observe Taqwa (fearing Allah as He should be feared). I would like to let you know that whoever performs Tawbah will succeed, Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴾And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴿ Truthful Tawbah is nothing but success and happiness. Also, I would like to say to you, "May Allah, for Whose sake you love me, love you!" I advise you to abide by Tawbah, befriend good people and stay away from bad ones. May Allah grant you guidance, success, safety and adherence to truth!

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117- Ruling on those who wrong themselves excessively by sinning

Q: I am a Muslim young man and I was keen to observe Salah. "Destiny willed" that I traveled abroad with my family for a period of time and for another period I traveled without them. Because of the absence of my family and companions of evil friends, I, for over four years, committed many sins including committing Zina (premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery), abandoning Salah, missing the Sawm of Ramadan, and having intercourse with my wife during the days of Ramadan.

I regretted and performed Tawbah (repentance to Allah) from my sins. Now, I observe Salah alone or in congregation. What should I do?

A: If the reality is as you have mentioned, the sincere Tawbah would suffice, as it wipes out all the previous sins. You are not obliged to make up for the missed fasts or Salah or offer any Kaffarah (expiation). The person who abandons Salah commits major Kufr (disbelief), even if they do not deny its obligation according to the most correct of the two opinions of scholars. If they deny that it is obligatory, they commit Kufr according to Ijma` (consensus of scholars).

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When the Kafir embraces Islam, he does not have to make up for the religious obligations belonging to Allah's Right, as He (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief), their past will be forgiven. But if they return (thereto), then the examples of those (punished) before them have already preceded (as a warning).﴿ The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ﴾Islam as well as Tawbah wipe out all previous misdeeds sins.﴿ You are advised to adhere to integrity, frequently ask for Allah's forgiveness and do many good deeds. You should rejoice at receiving good tidings and a good outcome, as Allah (may He be Praised) says: ﴾And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).﴿ May Allah guide you and us to adhere to the truth, for He is the best One whose help is sought.

It should be noted that you said in your question: "destiny willed", which is an inappropriate expression. You should rather say "Allah willed" as destiny has no will. May Allah guide us to comprehend and adhere to religion!

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118- A question on repentance

Q: I am a knowledge seeker and I love Allah and His Messenger but I keep committing a major sin. As soon as I cease and repent, I commit it again. When I renew my will to leave it, I commit it again after a few months. I do this for years and I hope you could find a solution for me. Could you kindly advise? May Allah reward you!

A: It is obligatory to be sincere with Allah and hope for good, if you repent to Allah, so be sincere, fight the desires of yourself, and ask your Lord for success and help. Do not follow whims! Fight the desires of yourself. Allah says:

﴾As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allâh's Religion — Islâmic Monotheism).﴿ Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴾And whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).﴿ ﴾and whosoever fears Allâh and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.﴿

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It is obligatory to fear Allah and let not Satan play with you and when you repent, be firm and beware of committing it. If you commit it again, make firm determination not to go back again in order not to do it for the third time. If Satan plays with you, this is due to your weak faith and lack of strong belief and insight. So, fear Allah and fight the desires of yourself in order not to go back again to sin. We ask Allah for guidance and success for you and us!

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119- Ruling on making mistakes unintentionally

Q: We are a group of friends and we always gather to discuss Islamic and secular matters. Once, a question was put forth: Can one lead a perfect Islamic life while living in the present society and dealing with its positive and negative aspects and influences? In other words, can one avoid all that, which is prohibited, enjoy oneself with all that which is permitted in the Book of Allah, and act in accordance with the Sunnah of Al-Mustafa (the Chosen Prophet, peace be upon him) doing what it permits and avoiding what it forbids.

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There were many answers to this query. They were all affirmative, but people differed regarding to what extent one can do so. Some agreed that one can lead a perfect Muslim life, while others did not agree claiming that the influences of society are so strong and its effects are numerous. Furthermore, many wrong matters might exist, which despite being wrong, the community allows them, such as football which is encouraged by all countries although it contains less benefit to youth when compared to horsemanship, swimming, and archery for instance.

Similarly, photography and statues of animate beings, foods, i.e. imports of meat from other countries, bank interests, etc.

After a long discussion and various disagreements,

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we decided to send the question to you so that we may have a satisfactory answer.

A: A Muslim is not infallible, as the Prophetic statement declares: (To err is human but the best of those who err is the one who repents to Allah) However, a Muslim who is living in a Muslim community should adhere to Islam according to their capacity, in accordance with Allah's Saying: (So keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can) .

It does not harm them to make some mistakes, which they do not commit intentionally or think are permissible according to their personal acquired knowledge and Islamic information, or by asking some scholars who give them a Fatwa that conforms with the purified Shari`ah (Islamic Law). In a nutshell, a Muslim must fear Allah as much as possible, abstain from what He prohibits and make an effort to fulfill what is obligatory on them. Also, if they slip, they must immediately offer sincere Tawbah (repentance) to Allah (Exalted be He).

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120- Rushing to acts of worship is a sign of goodness for a penitent

Q: I have repented to Allah and regretted my misdeeds more than a year ago. Then, Allah helped me offer `Umrah (lesser Hajj), Hajj (pilgrimage), and supplicate to Him on the Day of `Arafah (9th of Dhul-Hijjah) as well as other good acts, such as attending scholars' lectures like your lectures and that of Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin. Can these acts be signs of accepting my Tawbah (repentance to Allah)?

A: In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), repentance clears out what precedes it of evil deeds. There is no doubt that attending knowledge lectures and rushing to acts of worship are among the means of good and signs of goodness. I recommend you to adhere to the way of Allah, stick to what is right, attend knowledge sessions and perform Tawaf (circumambulation around the Ka`bah) and Salah (Prayer) frequently and expect good, in sha'a-Allah and stick to penitence.

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121- Issue on Tawbah

Q: Is there Tawbah (repentance to Allah) for those who commit sins and crimes?

A: Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴿ And: ﴾O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance!﴿ Tawbah is to repent to Allah, feel remorse for the sins committed, and give them up. A person should repent, abandon and give up sins for fear of Allah and out of His Glory, and they should have sincere determination not to return back to sin. So whoever repents to Allah, Allah will forgive them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ﴾Anyone who repents from sin is like one who has not sinned.﴿

Repentance wipes out past sins. If the right is related to another Muslim, a fourth condition should be met which is: seeking the forgiveness of the wronged person and giving the rights back to them if it is money

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or backbiting. When a person takes money from another, they should seek their forgiveness or give it back to them. Repentance is not valid except with these conditions; regret, quitting and sincere determination not to return back to sin. The fourth condition must be fulfilled to accept repentance which is: to give the right back to its owner in case of money or enable them to punish you in case of backbiting. A person should ask the wronged person to forgive them for backbiting, if possible otherwise they have to remind people of the virtues of the wronged persons in the places which they backbit them. A person should mention the wronged person good actions and good qualities which they know.

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122- Earthquakes and floods occur according to Divine Decree and Predestination

Q: Are earthquakes, volcanoes, thunderbolts, and floods of "Allah's Soldiers"?

A: All such matters that take place in the universe are subject to

Allah's Decree and Wisdom which He (Glorified be He) knows, and so many people do not. By such phenomena Allah punishes some people and showers mercy upon others. All this is subject to the Wisdom of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). May Allah grant us success!

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123- Adhkar for warding off devils

Q: I have two daughters whose room has a stinking smell. They tried to change the room but the same smell filled the room. My daughter always sees people throwing her on her face. What is Your Eminence's interpretation of this situation? What is the solution? Please, guide me.

A: This may be the act of the fools and disbelievers from the Jinn (creatures created from fire), so she should keep to this Du`a' (supplication): (A'udhu bikalimatillah Al-Tammat min sharri ma khalaq (I seek refuge in the Perfect Words of Allah from the evil that He has created).) When she enters the room, she should say: (A'udhu bikalimatillah Al-Tammat min sharri ma khalaq) three times. The Prophet (peace be upon him)

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said: (When anyone lands at a place, and then says: a'udhu bikalimatillah Al-Tammat min sharri ma khalaq, nothing will harm him.) In some narrations, he (peace be upon him) added: (Anyone who says this three times.') A believer should fear Allah and beware of the insinuations of Satan and the foolish Jinn. Whenever anyone is stricken by any such insinuations, they should seek refuge in Allah's Perfect Words from the evil that He has created and say thrice: "Bismillahi alladhi la yadurru ma` ismihi shai'un fil-Ardi wa-la fi as-Sama wa huwa as-Sami`u al-'Alim (In the Name of Allah in whose Name nothing can cause harm in the earth or the heavens and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing). It is reported in a Hadith that anyone who says this three times every morning and evening will not be harmed. Your daughter should frequently recite the Noble Qur'an which is a means for repelling Satan and the foolish Jinn and so she will not be harmed by anything. She should sincerely say, "a'udhu bikalimatillah Al-Tammat min sharri ma khalaq" and " Bismillahi alladhi la yadurru ma` ismihi shai'un fil-Ardi wa-la fi as-Sama wa huwa as-Sami`u al-'Alim." three times in the morning and

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evening and she will be cured. She should keep to Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) and recitation of the Qur'an, even if it were to recite Al-Fatihah or whatever she memorizes of the Qur'an.

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124- Warning against lying

Q: Is it reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that the Mu'min (believer) does not lie but may commit other sins? What should anyone do if they used to lie, then repented and fear to be recorded as liars?

A: A true Mu'min does not lie; only the person who lacks or suffers weakness of Iman (Faith) lies. Therefore, every true Mu'min should beware of lying and seek truthfulness. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Adhere to telling the truth, for telling the truth leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Jannah (Paradise); a person continues to speak the truth and endeavors to tell the truth until they are eventually recorded as truthful with Allah. Beware of lying for lying leads to

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obscenity and obscenity leads to Fire) Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: (O you who believe! Be afraid of Allâh, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds).) And: (Allâh will say: "This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth: theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise)) .

It is obligatory upon everyone to always stick to truthfulness and avoid lying except in the cases in which it is permissible to lie. Um Kulthum bint `Uqbah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: (The Prophet (peace be upon him) was not heard granting any Rukhsah (concession) concerning anything that the people say of lies except in three cases: war, reconciling between people, and what a man says to his wife, or a woman says to her husband.) There is nothing wrong with telling lies for an interest such as to reconcile

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among people and during wartime and what a man says to his wife, or a woman says to her husband.

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125- Helpful means for attaining sincerity

Q: Your Eminence Shaykh! I find difficulty in attaining sincerity in words and actions because of Satan. Please tell me the helpful means of achieving sincerity towards Allah in words and actions? May Allah reward you with the best!

A: Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has instructed us in His Saying ﴾And if an evil whisper comes to you from Shaitân (Satan), then seek refuge with Allâh.﴿ And: ﴾Surely, Shaitân (Satan) is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy.﴿ to seek refuge in Him from this enemy by saying "I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan". If a lot of whispers come to you, you should blow to your left three times saying "I seek refuge in Allah from Satan"

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and you will ensure safety and glad tidings. For the best outcome, you should be faithful while seeking refuge in Allah. If you suffer from Satanic insinuations concerning the Lord, Paradise, and the Fire, you should say: I believe in Allah and in His Messengers three times along with "I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan". This is the advice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) for his Companions when they experienced such insinuations. These insinuations are from Allah's Enemy and are removed once the person seeks refuge in Allah and say: "I believe in Allah and in His Messengers" thrice.

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126- Waswasah

about `Aqidah

Q: I suffer from Waswasah (insinuating thoughts from Satan), especially about `Aqidah (creed) and other acts which I perform. What is your advice?

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A: When you experience such a thing, you should seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan, spit (without saliva) thrice on the left - even if you are in the middle of Salah (Prayer) - and say: "A `udhu-Billahi mina Al-Shaytan -ir-Rajim [I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan]" three times. Along with this, you should also say: "I believe in Allah and His Messengers" if these Waswasah are relevant to `Aqidah. This is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught his Companions when they complained to him about having such Waswasah. May Allah grant us success!

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127- Curing Waswasah

Q: Praise is due to Allah, I am used to offer obligatory Salahs (Prayers) and perform supererogatory acts of worship, but sometimes I have doubts whether my good deeds will be accepted or not due to Waswasah (insinuating thoughts from Satan), may Allah protect us from this. What is the cure of this? May Allah reward you well!

A: There is no doubt that this is caused by Satan, but a Muslim, when performing acts of worship, should think good of Allah, make the effort to attain sincerity and truthfulness in them and pay no attention to Waswasah that entices them that they are showing off or

so and so of false whispers as long as they are seeking to please Allah and not people. One should know that this is from Satan and, thus, always seek refuge with Allah from Satan. It is also helpful to try to occupy oneself and turn away from this for it is from Allah's Enemy. One should fight him by saying Isti`adhah (saying: "A`udhu-Billahi mina Al-Shaytan -ir-Rajim [I seek refuge with Allah from the accursed Satan]") frequently and busying oneself with other matters, such as reciting the Qur'an, seeking forgiveness, speaking to brothers and family or any other matter.

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128- Salat-ul-Tawbah

Q: In my early youth, I committed some sins. All praise is due to Allah, I retuned to Allah in repentance. However, I am still concerned and I heard about Salat-ul-Tawbah (Prayer for repentance) and I hope that you would explain it to me. May Allah reward you with the best!

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A: Indeed, turning to Allah in repentance wipes out the sins committed before, all praise be to Allah. Therefore, you should give up your doubts that Allah has turned your Tawbah (repentance) away. Rather, you have to hold good thoughts about your Lord and have the firm belief that He has accepted your heartfelt Tawbah. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful﴾ In the above Ayah, Allah has made success contingent upon repentance. Whoever repents, they will achieve success. Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴿And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).﴾ Allah is the Ever-Truthful Who never breaks His promises. Allah (Glorified be He) also says: ﴿O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)﴾ The Ayah indicates that Allah will surely fulfill His Promise.

Accordingly, you should expect good from Allah and know that He will accept your Tawbah if you are sincere in it, regret the sins you committed and resolve to give them up forever. Moreover, you should beware against the insinuations of Satan. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says in the Hadith Qudsy (Revelation from Allah in the Prophet's words):

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﴿I am to My slave as he thinks of Me.﴾

Therefore, you should expect goodness from Allah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿Let none of you die without expecting good from Allah.﴾ (Related by Muslim in his Sahih (authentic) book of Hadith).

As for Salat-ul-Tawbah, it was authentically reported on the authority of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴿If a Muslim commits a sin, then performs Wudu' (ablution) well and offers two Rak`ahs (units of Prayer), and asks for Allah's Forgiveness, Allah will accept their Tawbah.﴾ May Allah grant us success!

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129- A person who has made Tawbah is not to expose themselves

Q: The nature of my work tempted me to commit some faults and sins relating to relations with women. Such sins were of less seriousness than Zina (premarital sexual intercourse and/or adultery). I also lied lest I should be exposed. Finally, I have made Tawbah (repentance to Allah). Do I also have to tell people about the sins that I committed?

A: Tawbah is sufficient. When Allah conceals a Servants sins, they should not expose the bad deeds and sins that they committed. Allah (Exalted be He) accepts the Tawbah of whoever makes it. It is thus Wajib (obligatory) on you to make Tawbah, beware of reasons that lead to evils, Zina, and all things that Allah prohibits. You have also to make Istighfar (seeking forgiveness from Allah). Again, you have not to expose your misdeeds or show up your faults.

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Sharing advice among Muslims is obligatory

Q: I am a married young man. I have three children. I live with my mother, grandmother and brothers in our house that we inherited from our deceased father. My problem,

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in brief, is that my eldest brother who lives with us does not offer Salah (Prayer) at home or at the Masjid (mosque). He often drinks alcohol and has no job. For this reason, I quarreled with him many times, but in vain. On the contrary, he openly declares that he will never perform Salah. Feeling that he made no use of my advice, I made up my mind to leave the house. Yet my mother wept a lot and accused me of being ungrateful to her and said to me: "Praise your Lord so that He will not punish you with a son like him."

Your Eminence Shaykh, I am very confused. Is it permissible for me to leave that house and my mother, knowing that it is me who supports them financially? If I turn a blind eye to him for the sake of my mother, will I be considered his accomplice in sin and evils? Please, direct me!

A: Those who do not offer Salah are Kafirs (disbelievers). May Allah protect us! The Prophet (peace be upon him) says in the Sahih (authentic) Hadith: ﴾What makes one a Kafir and a Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) is abandoning Salahs.﴿ He (peace be upon him) also says: ﴾That

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which differentiates us from them (disbelievers and hypocrites) is our performance of Salah. He who abandons it becomes a Kafir.﴿ As for drinking wine, it is one of the most abominable and grievous major sins. Regarding wine, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, and Al-Ansâb, and Al-Azlâm (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaitan's (Satan) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.﴿

It is authentically established that ﴾the Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed Khamr (intoxicant), the one who drinks it, the one who serves it, the one who squeezes it (the grapes, etc), the one for whom it is squeezed, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, the one who sells it, the one who buys it and the one who consumes its price﴿ We implore Allah to grant us safety.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ﴾A committer of Zina (sexual intercourse outside marriage), when he commits Zina, does not commit it while he is a believer; and he does not drink Khamr, when he drinks it, while he is a believer...﴿ Khamr is the source of all evils and it is one of the most grave and abominable major sins. We advise you to continue advising him and intimidating him of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) in a good manner and through endearment one time and warning another time. In doing so, you should also supplicate to Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He)

to guide him and expand for him his breast. Ask your Lord to grant him guidance, protect him from the evil of himself and his whims, inspire him with what is right, and guide him to accept what is right. He is your brother who has a right upon you. Supplicate to your Lord at the times when supplications are most entitled to be answered: during your prostration, at the end of Salah, and during the last part of the night that He (Glorified be He) guide and protect him against Satan. You can also persuade him through seeking the help of your good Muslim brothers who may influence him through giving him advice and direction. Do not leave your home, rather remain with your mother and treat her duly. If advising him is of no avail and is not accepted by him, then you can refer his case to the Committee that, we hope, will handle the issue. If it takes no action, then you can refer the issue to the court because abandoning Salah and drinking Khamr is a grave matter. The one who practices these things openly and carelessly is not to be turned a blind eye to. If he still refuses the advice, the ruling of Shari`ah will be applied against him. May Allah grant us, you, him and all Muslims guidance!

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131- Conditions of Tawbah

Q: An inquirer says: "Having committed many sins and prohibited actions, I now feel that I am a sinner." He adds: "Please, guide me to the right path because I am seeking to repent and I want to give this up, In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills)."

A: You should know that Allah's Mercy encompasses everything and that His Benevolence is great and that He (Glorified and Exalted be He) is the Generous, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful of those who show mercy, and the best to accept repentance. You should also know that betaking oneself to committing sins involves great evil and wide corruption and results in Allah's Wrath. Yet once a Servant sincerely repents to Allah, Allah will accept his Tawbah (repentance). The Messenger (peace be upon him) was asked many times about a man frequently committing such-and-such a sin, many evil acts, and acts of Kufr (disbelief) and then repents, where he (peace be upon him) said: (Tawbah wipes out all misdeeds done before it, and so does Islam.) Another narration reads: (Islam effaces previous sins (committed before embracing it),

and Tawbah erases previous sins.) This means that offering Tawbah erases sins. You should be assured that, thanks to sincere Tawbah, Allah forgives the sins and bad deeds, even Kufr. This is why Allah (Glorified be He) says: (And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful) Allah makes success pending on Tawbah. Allah (Glorified be He) says: (O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)) When being attributed to Allah, the verb "`Asa" (may) means that this will happen for sure i.e., those who sincerely repenting to Allah will have their sins forgiven and Allah will admit them into Jannah (Paradise) as a grace and a bounty from Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He).

O brother, you must turn to Allah in sincere Tawbah and remain steadfast on this and be devoted to Allah, and hopefully expect that it erases your sins, however great.

There are three conditions for Tawbah to be accepted: Feeling sincere regret for the past sin one committed;

firm intention of giving up and abandoning the sins out of obedience and reverence for Allah; and truthfully determining not to commit these sins any more. These are indispensible conditions: First, feeling regret and sorrow for what you committed of sins in the past; second, to give up and abandon these sins, both minor and major; and third, to have firm will not to commit them again. If you have usurped a right of others, whether money, blood or honor, then give it back to them. This is a fourth condition in order for Tawbah to be accepted. You must give back people's rights that you owe to them. If there is retribution against you, you must enable them to enforce it unless they

accept blood money. If you owe them money, pay it back to them unless they forgive you. If you have committed backbiting and slander against them, then ask them to forgive you. Yet if asking them to forgive you will result in more evil, then there is no harm in not doing so. Meanwhile, you should supplicate to Allah for them and grant them forgiveness and should mention the good attributes you know about them is such places where you spoke ill about them. This is to be a Kaffarah (expiation) for the wrong you have committed against them. You should do so soon before meeting your death. Then you should be patient and be truthful. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: ﴾And those who, when they have committed Fâhishah (illegal sexual intercourse) or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allâh and ask forgiveness for their sins; - and none can forgive sins but Allâh - and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know.﴿

You should understand the meaning of: ﴾and do not persist﴿ This means that they did not insist on committing sins, rather they repented, regretted and abandoned their sins. Then, Allah (Glorified be He) says: ﴾For such, the reward is Forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise), wherein they shall abide forever. How excellent is this reward for the doers (who do righteous deeds according to Allâh's Orders).﴿ This is the reward of those who repented, gave up and did not insist on sins. They will be admitted into paradise. In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills), you will be one of them if you are sincere in Tawbah. May Allah grant us success!

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132- Issue on the conditions of Tawbah

Q: I was ignorant and then Allah guided me to Islam. In the past, I committed some injustices which I can't mention here. Yet I heard the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) wherein he says: (He who has wronged his brother's honor or anything else,

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should ask his forgiveness today before the time (i.e. the Dooms Day) when he will have neither a dinar nor a dirham...) **What is your advice to me, your Eminence Shaykh, may Allah protect and guard you!**

A: Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) allows His servants to repent. He (Glorified be He) says: (And all of you beg Allâh to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful) And: (O you who believe! Turn to Allâh with sincere repentance!) And: (And verily, I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (He who repents from his sins is like the one who did not commit a sin.)

Whoever commits a sin, should hasten to repent, regret, give up, and determine not to return to this sin as Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He)

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forgives those who repent. When the servant observes sincere Tawbah (repentance to Allah), regrets what he did, and determines to give it up and not to do it again, for the sake of Allah and out of fear of Him, he will be forgiven and Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) will blot out his past sins out of His Favor and Kindness. Nevertheless, if the sin is against people, he should give back their rights and repent from what he did. He must also regret it and determine not to do it again. Besides, he has to give back rights to the parties wronged or ask for their forgiveness, such as saying: "My brother, forgive me!" or "Pardon me!" This is based upon the Hadith mentioned by the questioner and many other Hadiths and Ayahs (Qur'anic verses). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: (Whoever has wronged his brother should ask his forgiveness today before the time (i.e., the Dooms Day) when he will have neither a dinar nor a dirham. (He should secure pardon in this life) before some of his good deeds are taken and paid to his brother. Or if he has done no good deeds, some of the bad deeds of his brother are taken to be loaded on him (in the Hereafter.)) This is the retribution he deserves.

The Mu'min (believer) should be keen to free himself from his brother's rights by giving them back to him or by asking for his pardon. If he violated somebody's honor, he should ask for his forgiveness if possible. Otherwise, if he is afraid of consequences

or if telling him may cause severer harm, he should ask Allah's forgiveness for him, supplicate to Allah for him, and mention his merits instead of the evils he mentioned about him in the past. He should wash the first bad deed by later good deeds by mentioning and spreading his merits, asking Allah's forgiveness, and supplicating to Him for this person. In this way, he can get rid of the problem.

Here is the end of part twenty eight

and next In sha'a-Allah (if Allah wills) is part twenty nine.

It begins with Kitab Mulhaqat Al-Taharah (Book of additional matters pertaining to ritual purification).

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